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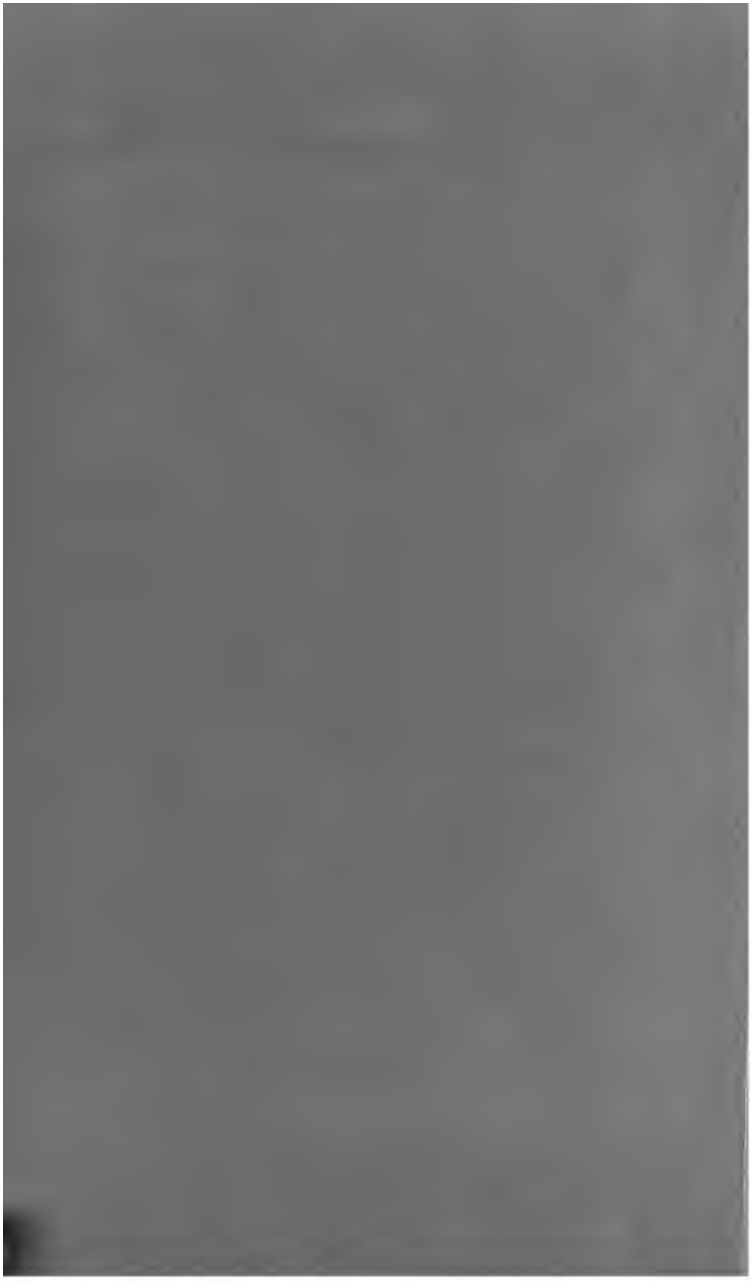

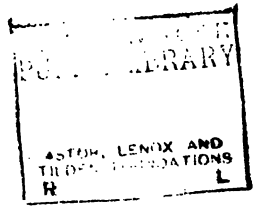
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"Others followed my example; and before one could count twenty, as many darts were embedded in the monster's *flesh.*"

# DOOMED

*A Startling Message to the People of Our Day, interwoven in an Antediluvian Romance of Two Old Worlds and Two Young Lovers*

BY

QUEEN METEL and PRINCE LOAB
of Atlo, Re-incarnated in its Editors, Marian and Franklin Mayoe

By the Atlon Calendar, the Year 14,909;
by Our Calendar, the Year 1920.

*Illustrations by*
*R. EMMETT OWEN*

NEW YORK
FRANK ROSEWATER, PUBLISHER
1920

NEW YORK
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PUBLISHED OCT.–NOV., 1920

# A WORD TO BEGIN

By the Editors

In offering to our readers so remarkable a production as "Doomed," some rational explanation of its source is due. How came it into our possession? That, in as few words as possible, we will now endeavor to explain.

Traveling last year along one of the tributaries of the Amazon, we were simultaneously stricken with one of those malignant fevers so common in that region. On recovery, my wife astounded me with the tale of a weird vision I also had at the same time beheld.

In this vision, two figures faced us—such perfect counterparts of ourselves, we gasped with astonishment. As with one voice, they spoke, saying we were their hundredth re-incarnation. More than a hundred centuries had passed since their day; and now they were here to deliver through us, for our world, a most momentous message from the people of their long forgotten world.

"Loab Ben Phra and Metel Mafra are we," they explained, "once Prince of Sidon and Queen

of Omshola. Our tale had at the time been written on fresh papyrus; but that copy has long since crumbled to dust. So we have rewritten the story containing the great message—this time in your own tongue; and here it is."

With these words, they each laid their portion of the story upon a table near our cots, and thereupon vanished.

We should have laughed heartily over the strange vision, but that, glancing at the table, there lay the manuscript copy of the story, in three parts—two by the husband and one by the wife; and it was identically the same as that given our readers under the title "Doomed."

Both story, and the message interwoven therein, speak so well for themselves, nothing we might further say would add a jot to the interest of the one or the mighty import of the other.

And now, having had our say, let our readers do the rest. It will be for them to determine the import of the message it conveys, and to act upon it as conscience will dictate.

NEW YORK, August 10, 1920.

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# *PART I*

## OUR BETHROTHAL—AS TOLD BY PRINCE LOAB

# CHAPTER I

## The Secret of the Nobles

My earliest recollection is of being fondled and petted by a big black woman, my nurse, over whose funny nose I puzzled my little head from day to day without arriving at any answer to the strange riddle it presented. To my infantile mind the huge shining ring inserted in that organ seemed to be a part and parcel of it, and would have awed me but for the repeated kindnesses she bestowed upon me. I at that time seldom saw my mother, and this Nubian nurse was more than mother to me.

In my early boyhood I was pampered with every privilege and luxury that wealth could command. For, of my father's numerous wives, Folka, my mother, was the chief favorite, and my father was one of the wealthiest of the Princes of Sidon.[1] We lived in a lordly mansion, in the heart of the city, and not far from the string of warehouses on the water front, from which my father carried on most of his trade.

[1] Very likely the Sodom of biblical fame.

Prince Phra, my father, stood high in the councils of State; had more than fifty stout galleys plowing the seas in behalf of his trade; owned such enormous tracts of land that all the thousands of slaves thereon could not cultivate the quarter thereof; and held also so many secured notes and such hoards of silver and of gold, as to dwarf in comparison all the rest of his possessions.

Like all successful men, my father was devoutly religious, worshipping all the gods from Eshmum and Astarte to Sat[2] and his consort Mammon, the goddess of gain, who never appeared to mortals save in serpent form. This Mammon was the most popular of Sidon gods, exerting a most potent influence upon the prosperity of all Phoenicia.

Upon nearing the age of six, I remember being placed in the care of a tutor named Merto, who began with teaching me the Phoenician alphabet in which are as many as twenty-two different sound symbols, through which the spoken language is easily transcribed to papyrus or parchment.

The alphabet once mastered, it was just fun to go on forming out of it all sorts of familiar words. It required some effort; but it was an exertion I could enjoy, as if it had been a game.

[2] The same as the Egyptian deity Set—the Satan of Christian theology.

Books once puzzled me as an unintelligible conglomeration of mysterious hieroglyphics; but with the alphabet at my command, they seemed so no longer. Now they were lights, affording me daily new glimpses of the world.

Tutor Merto selected my books, at first all delightful fairy tales and love romances, in which their heroes invariably triumphed in the end. It would have been a shame to have ended otherwise; and had any of them so ended, I believe I should have torn them into shreds.

In the course of time I finally tired of these humdrum tales, which merely repeated one another, and were all tuned rather to the palate of the mind than for its sustenance.

So I was now put on books of travel, which cast a new luster on my little world, broadening the horizon of my mind. . . And when at length books of history were placed at my disposal, how much wider scope it gave to my views of life! What a romance it unfolded! Nations played its heroes, and the ages were the arena in which they combated. Was ever greater romance than is set down in the story of mankind? But how few there are who can reduce into an intelligible whole the brief glimpses and distorted images we have to draw on, in weaving its romance!

Think not, reader, my physical education was in the meantime being neglected. Far from it: for between the hours of my reading I was allowed to indulge in much sport and play, and also received instruction in the arts of using bow and arrow and spear, of handling sword and dagger, of riding, swimming and rowing, and of all practices that would help to make of me a huntsman, a warrior and a courtly gentleman.

Swiftly these happy years sped, till my fourteenth year had been reached, when I was seized with a powerful longing to see the great world with my own eyes. I had seen enough through books, which are but the eyes of other men.

Daily I now besought my fond parents to let me go abroad, if only for a single voyage; but to no purpose. My mother, Folka, was the most steadfast and unyielding, dreading to part with me. But time by degrees prepared her for the ordeal, so that as soon as father's consent was secured, that of my mother quickly followed.

My parents well knew that sooner or later such a course of travel would have to be undertaken in order to make me efficient in the arts of trade and social intercourse becoming a Phoenician noble—one who was always master of ship and shekel, as well as of sword.

I had already received lessons in the art of

reckoning sums; and in both the Hellenic and Egyptian tongues, which were most needed in trading abroad; and also in the art of bargaining—a practice requiring even more skill than the use of either styl or sword. For there is neither top nor bottom to prices in foreign lands, and there it behooves the buyer to be able to well conceal his desire, whether to buy or to sell. There was indeed more thrust and feint in this art than in the use of the sword. And none were more skilled therein than we Phoenicians.

But there was one trick that our Phoenician merchants made common practice of—out of pure patriotism, as well as from love of the gain it yielded. It was through this very practice our dear Phoenicia was forging ahead of other nations, and promised soon to acquire mastery of the world. Already she was owner of more slaves, more lands, more gold and silver and precious gems, more stout ships and more wealth in loans to foreign potentates (secured by hostages) than any nation had ever gathered together.

Fortunately, I am now residing in the land of Atlo, where I may without peril of my life reveal to you, my readers, what this trick consisted in. The cunning trick was taught our Phoenician nobles by Mammon or Mam, the goddess of gain, who appeared before them in her serpent form,

bringing to them the silver shekel, to be employed in doing their trading. But the trick was involved in the use of her maxim bidding them SPEND FOR THEIR LIVING NO MORE THAN THE HALF OF THEIR INCOME—PUTTING THE REMAINDER INTO HOARD, AND ONLY INVESTING IT SUBJECT TO RETURN WITH ADDITION. Their persistent adherence to this maxim, they were assured, would in time make them masters of the world.

This maxim won the approval of all the nobles; and was by them communicated to the lesser merchants, by whom it was also admired and ardently applied.

So it came to pass, that after all our merchants had been for a goodly period tacitly combined in spending no more for their living than the half of what they took in, a countless number of unspent shekels kept on gathering in their hoards, ever more and more, until at length an intense money famine became felt among the non-mercantile people at home and the nations abroad with whom our merchants had been trading. For the fat hoards of our merchants were only bulging with what had been extracted from the purses of those they had been dealing with and which they had left lean and empty.

Obeying the maxim of Mam, the Goddess of Gain, our merchants allowed their unspent shekels to remain in hoard only long enough to produce a tight squeeze, under pressure of which most of it could be so invested as to insure return with addition. Under the pressure of hoarding, which causes an artificial scarcity, men were compelled to part with properties at low valuations; to contract loans at interest; and often even to sell themselves into bondage, or else their wives and children. For the pinch of poverty is like unto a thumbscrew that tortures till honor, virtue and the last shred of self respect are sacrificed for present relief. I have since observed that dispossession stops not with mere material properties, but drags into its net the very souls of men.

So both at home and abroad did our merchants acquire fat, income-yielding properties, batch after batch, as their shekels kept on returning, and passing again out of hoard and into investments—piling up into a very mountain of wealth, to the nation's glory and power. It was this that made the maxim a patriotic shibboleth and won the heart of the nation.

Although at the time a mere boy, the far-seeing shrewdness of this maxim quite enamored me. Its wisdom was so clear and manifest. Could

statecraft have chosen a better maxim? Just think how so small a germ of inequality could mould a whole world to its own disproportion. What a conquering sword was concealed beneath this diabolic maxim—a sword invisible, keen and irresistible, through whose use all the people of this wide earth could be peaceably vanquished and subjugated—conquered without departure from pious righteousness—all dispossessed and turned into outcasts and bondsmen! And meanwhile the merchants of Phoenicia would become so enriched, the least of them would dwell in palaces and live in feasting and revels, surrounded with the fair women of their harems.

How I admired the ingenious maxim! How I worshipped its wisdom—the wisdom that had in it the guile of the serpent, of the Goddess Mam!

I did not then understand that it was Sat's aim in sending up to us his dam Mammon, to cause our world to become divided into hostile classes, facing one another as possessors and dispossessed, masters and dependents, rich and poor, fattened drones and starved toilers, all driven by the pinch of an everlasting shekel famine or the boundless rivalry of crazed ostentation and love of power—all set at loggerheads with each other, class against class, faction against faction, section

against section, nation against nation and man against man. Between the lowest depths of dispossession and the loftiest pinnacles of affluence, the entire human family might forever be kept a prey to his temptations and in the chains of his bondage. All men were thereby doomed to become his subjects in the underworld.

But what cared we patriotic Phoenicians for Sat's motives—we who would stop at naught, if adding to the glory and power of our dear Phoenicia!

Writing now, after long years of residence in Atlo, where trade is conducted so differently from what is the case in all other lands—a manner infinitely superior—I can readily perceive the brazen fraud involved in the devil's cunning maxim, and also realize the awful horror of its consequences. What a cheat to sell an *excess* of productions, and only take, in return for the excess, the *properties* of those they traded with—thus stripping them to nakedness and servitude! I now marvel I should ever have been so stupid as to have admired this detestable fraud.

Before the day of my departure from home, I for the first time accompanied my father to do worship in the temple of Mammon. It was a vast structure, glittering in the sun as if one huge

mass of jewels, though all was of colored glass bordered and seamed with showy ornamentations in gold and silver paint. To the very core, the structure was flimsy—all show and sham, well befitting the serpent therein worshipped.

I still vividly recall the grave solicitude of my father, on imparting to me his final instructions before starting on the contemplated voyage. Wisely did he admonish me to conduct myself with due respect to elders and superiors in rank, and to compel adequate deference from inferiors. . . . Though sparing of my funds as became a son of Phoenicia, I was not to refrain from being lavish with them, when demanded by the dignity of my rank. . . . Against the seductions of the fair sex he cautioned me, naming some of the devices these creatures employed, and at the same time advising me to soon take unto myself a wife coming from a family of wealth that could becomingly dower her. Should my choice prove unfortunate, he assured me, I might find remedy in taking unto myself additional wives. (While jotting down these lines my wife, Metel, has taken me unawares and is smiling at my stupid confession.)

A magnificent outfit had been provided for me, and also a fine retinue of servants, such as be-

came a prince; for with that title I was thereafter to be honored.

My mother wept profusely as she pronounced her benediction, her hand resting upon my head, and at parting handed me a few precious keepsakes, among which was an amulet in whose golden frame was set a topaz of brilliant yellow. With this suspended around my neck, sadness would be banished and enchantments dispelled.

A canopied altar had been erected at the sea side, and upon this my father now offered a lamb to the god of the sea, accompanying the act with the recital of a long ritual of prayers and a final invocation in behalf of my safe return.

These ceremonies over, I was given my father's final blessing, and then stepped lightly into the tiny boat that bore me speedily to the side of the Golden Moon, into which I was now hoisted and which was soon bearing me over the waves into that wider world I so much longed to see.

## CHAPTER II

### In the Wider World

The Golden Moon, the vessel in which I sailed, was patterned after the very latest models, broad breasted, and with a tall prow bearing on it the image of the serpent, by which it might be distinguishable as a trading vessel. From her upper deck rose three tall masts to which were fastened canvas sails so set as to be able to catch each transient breeze. . . . In her hold, chained to benches, sat twenty rowers, of hardened look, who were compelled to labor with their oars by the lash in the hands of a master stationed behind them. They were one and all condemned criminals, sold into this form of bondage.

For some time the voyage was a delightful one, passing under balmy skies and gazing upon charming scenes, in which each feathery cloud glowed in fiery tints, and the shimmering waters of the vast expanse before us, kissed by the sunlight, seemed one mass of gleaming emeralds. Along the shores, the wooded heights and frequent villages were also picturesque. . . . But even beauty

loses its charm by constant repetition; and so did this scenery, till it finally ceased to attract, and even became tiresome.

For many weeks we sailed on over the smooth waters of the great Central Sea,[1] on whose shores and along whose streams, lie nearly all the cities of the world that are of any consequence.

Port after port we made, trading at each—I cannot say for their number how many of them there were—till we at length arrived at the famed city of Athens. Here I was landed, and, together with my retinue, I was to remain for a whole year, improving my tongue in the language of the Hellenes, called Greek, and my mind as well. For in this city is the world's center of learning and of art; and here, it is said, even a fool may gather some wisdom.

I had a servant at once engage quarters for me in the Acropolis, which is a new section of the city and lies high up in view of the region known as the Peloponnesus, separated from the mainland by a narrow strip of sea.

Fine palaces and mansions, as well as grand temples and other public buildings surrounded us here, and rarely did we encounter a plot of ground but that it contained either some sparkling fountain or graceful statuary.

[1] The Mediterranean.

The whole city was a gem of magnificence, by the side of which our beloved Sidon would have been shamed.

What a host of strange people walked its streets, thronging every park and pathway—men hailing from every quarter of the earth, each decked out in the costume of his native land and attended by his servants or slaves, after the fashion of his own country. There were tall, frowsy-haired men from Ethiopia, black as ebony and shiny as silk; stout, swarthy Libyans from the desert plains of Afric; haughty Egyptians from the fertile banks of the famed river Nil; semi-naked barbarians, hairy as apes, from a region far to the north clad in a sheet of eternal white and lashed by cold winds so sharp they cut into the very bones; and there were also tall, sky-gazing men from the land of Ind, so distant it belonged rather to another world. There were many, many more—far too many for my confused memory to recall.

How I doted on the opportunity to converse with these strangers, from whom so much was to be learned—so much never set down in books. How fascinating were their talks concerning the manifold aspects of their different worlds; their customs and manners; their sources of subsistence; the domestic animals; the slaves who toiled for

them; and the beasts of the wilds; and also the numerous gods there worshipped. Never had I heard of so many different deities. To listen to all their tales of prowess in battle, and their strange experiences and adventures, how it thrilled my blood, and filled my soul with new ambitions.

Schools of philosophy were plentiful; and one could hardly go out without encountering their heavy-browed, long-bearded pedagogs, sedately leading a column of pupils, and now and then stopping to deliver lengthy discourses.

Little heed did I give to these speculative philosophers, who presumed to weigh shadows and split hairs. I once met one of them holding in his hands a painted globe, which he made his pupils believe represented the earth revolving both around itself and around the sun. His bold audacity so amused me, I was tempted to interrupt his discourse by asking him how it came that if the earth was round, men fell not off, and its waters did not spill themselves over the skies and drown the very gods? To this he made reply, saying that a mysterious force held all things bound fast to the earth—explaining one ridiculous statement by another equally as absurd. For were all things bound fast to the earth, how came it we were able to walk about?

Detesting this brazen audacity, I spat in the

fellow's face, and was in consequence hailed before a solemn magistrate, charged with assault. Hearing the pleas on both sides, this venerable official promptly exonerated me, while subjecting my opponent to a substantial fine for daring to teach the Athenian youth so bold a contradiction of the obvious truth.

The native Athenian is in many ways a superior type of being, lithe and muscular in limb, fluent in speech and nimble in wit. Lusty lungs he also has, shouting and singing with a rare spirit and gaiety. He also dances exquisitely, in all his movements being a perfect model of grace. . . . But no men are perfect: for with all their many virtues, I find them fickle and deceitful. . . . Few of the fair sex did I chance to encounter without their faces being hooded; and if all were as fair as those whose features I was permitted to behold, they may well be counted the most beautiful of women.

Slaves do all the arduous labor both in the city and on the surrounding lands, the freemen devoting themselves mainly to the arts and learning, carving the elegant statuary one sees upon all sides and all the beautiful ornamentations on palaces and temples. They also paint and do much architectural designing, as well as that which ap-

pears in the rich tapestries and on the fine pottery they make. There are also among them a moiety of jugglers and dancers, of musicians and players, of rhetoricians and sophists, of smiths and sword makers, of philosophers, soldiers and of priests.

Yet along with all this array of busy freemen, there are no lack of idlers and filchers who live on the toil of others—mendicants, beggars and thieves. One had but to go near the market place to see this herd of pickpockets.

The government of this city is called a democracy—a new-fangled experiment in which the freemen elect their own rulers—of course from those named by the wealthy class, from whose patronage the freemen live.

What more could be expected where the idle poor were depraved, and the rest were so dependent on the good will of the rich? They were free; but perhaps more lorded over by their patrons than other slaves. Were they not always on the very edge of despair, forever worrying—to make ends meet, to keep the roof over their heads?

There was something truly grand in the pride of this artist freedom, and something in it pitiably ridiculous. For while they were eternally lauding their liberty, hard-handed tyranny was making sport of them.

I shall never forget the delightful year spent in this queen of cities—a year that sped so swiftly, I was startled on hearing the arrival of the Golden Moon announced, allowing me barely time to bid my friends farewell, before taking my leave.

Our shipmaster, named Gogol, of whom I should have made earlier mention, rushed forward to embrace me, on once more setting foot aboard ship. He was delighted to note my altered appearance and demeanor. He was a man of large figure, with fierce, dark eyes, a prominent nose, and a protruding chin. His deep, bellowing voice could be heard above the din of the wildest storm.

Leaving Athens, after having taken aboard many of her fine productions, such as tapestries, paintings, pottery and carvings, we traded at many ports, till we came to a vast isle, the largest in the world, known as Sicania,[1] which we thereafter skirted, gathering much booty in ravaging unprotected villages along the coast. Most of it was in gold, and fair women whom we took to be sold as slaves in Sidon. We also captured many lads in these raids, and also bought numbers of them for the sake of the bounty paid on them at Sidon, where the bringing in of slaves

[1] The island of Sicily.

was encouraged. These added profits, derived from slaves and the bounties on them, made it the easier for us to underbid everywhere and sell the excess of productions by which Phoenicia was to become mistress of the nations.

Returning to Sidon, we left our cargo in my father's warehouses, whence we took a fresh cargo for the next voyage.

Of the shekels realized from the slaves, the tenth part was set aside for the ship's crew—a practice insuring their loyalty.

Our next voyage carried us up the great river Nil, with whose numerous cities we did a very profitable trade. In its waters we beheld gigantic beasts called behemoths sporting like kittens, and we also saw countless numbers of huge bone-encrusted serpents basking idly on its sandy banks, and not a few pursuing our vessel to catch the offal thrown overboard. They had dreadful mouths lined with rows of monster fangs that could carve their prey as one might carve cheese. They were called crocodiles.

Several other voyages we made before finally venturing a trip beyond the confines of the Central Sea, passing through the narrow strip [1] of water lying between what are called the Pillars of Hercules—massive rocks stationed like a pair

[1] The Straits of Gibraltar.

of gate posts at the entrance to the unbounded waters of the Western Sea,[2] on which few mariners dare to venture. For not only are its waters infested with monsters possessed of supernatural powers, but also with devilish wizards, and of mermaids who entice mariners into the depths and there inflict upon them horrible deaths. There is also always danger of being inextricably caught in the mighty swirl of its waters and dashed to destruction over the bottomless precipice at the world's end.

Not far westward dared we venture on this trip, clinging ever close to shore. To the north we directed our course, till we reached our destination in a remote region abounding with a rare ore from which we derived one of the ingredients of bronze. The savages we traded with were a fierce body, ready to fight at the slightest provocation, ever swinging over their heads their huge war clubs.

Returning from this voyage, adverse winds, long continued, drove us out of our course; and one tempest following quickly on the heels of the other, finally got us so confused, we knew not where we were located.

So we kept on drifting until, one morning, a strange land came into view, whose shores we

[2] The Atlantic.

followed many days without reaching any end thereof. From this we concluded it must be the great continent of Atlantis, the land of the Sun God, of which we had heard strange tales.[8]

Toward dusk of the fifth day, a snug harbor opened its arms to receive us; and as we glanced shoreward, we beheld, standing a ways inland, a single isolated structure of considerable size—a rather handsome building.

Along its sides were rows of peculiar squares, that shone like so many massive rubies. The surroundings were also quite attractive, its downward sloping lawn ornamented with flower beds, and fountains, and shrubbery. To its rear seemed to lie a great stretch of ground, on which groups of children of varied ages were sporting—laughing and shouting with such glee as had never before greeted my ears.

There was no sign of fortifications; and as we pondered over the sight, we all realized it augured a rich harvest of spoils for us. Here must have resided many families from which large booty, even if only in slaves, was to be derived.

[8] The continent is sometimes alluded to as Atlantica. Plato in his *Critias* says that nine thousand years before the time of Solon the people of this continent had been a powerful nation. . . . . Plato, Horace and some others allude to two Atlanticas, Hesperides and the Elysian Fields, believed to be the abode of the blessed.

Hardly were we anchored than, without loss of a single moment, Shipmaster Gogol summoned to his side all our fighting men. Quietly he now bid them gather their war equipments, preparatory to landing. Then, pointing to the structure, with a peculiar turn in the gesture, he let them know his object.

Both warriors and equipments were soon landed, and a few moments after, the men stood in line, twenty in all, togged in the full panoply of war.

It was a sight to behold these stalwart men lined up, arrayed for battle, their heads encased in shining helmets and their broad chests covered with stout bull-hide breast plates. They bore as fighting weapons long javelins, keen-bladed swords and sharp poniards.

Much against my desire, I was not allowed a place in the ranks; though to conciliate me, I was allowed to occupy an elevation nearby.

Led by Master Gogol, the advance now began, darkness having set in. All was quiet, the children in the rear having retired within the great building. Noiselessly they moved onward, soon standing upon the broad lawn fronting the strange mansion.

Here they encountered a great number of rising

pipes of greatly varying height, with wide, punctured heads whose object they were unable to interpret. But suddenly, from all these pipes rose jets of light spray; and, as if in a flash, the whole atmosphere seemed to be a vast seething furnace. The mere dropping of a rocket upon these fountains seemed as if by magic, to have started the terrible blaze. It made a beautiful, but horrible sight; and I looked never again to set eyes on these men save as cindered corpses.

Overwhelmed by the atmosphere of flame, Master Gogol and his men fell prone to the earth, closing their eyes and holding their nostrils. Each also now inwardly prayed to his favorite god, offering every imaginable sacrifice if succored in this dilemma.

Around them hissed and roared the flames, heating the atmosphere to suffocating. Not long could it be endured.

It seemed to me an eternity before the flames subsided; and I already counted our men as among the dead. Who could survive so long a spell of flame and heat?

No one was therefore more astonished than I, after the flames had subsided, to see the men finally rise to their feet, staggering with weakness, and greatly rejoiced that they were able to do as much.

Opening their eyes, as they became more settled, they saw standing before them a trio of stately figures bearing themselves with all the majestic grace of heavenly angels. Yet they were only three women, the leader of whom now spoke, addressing them in their own tongue, though with a foreign accent, saying:

"Strangers from the East; barbarians and pirates, who have come here for plunder, and to carry off our lads and women; worshippers also of Mam,[1] we pity your benighted state; and therefore pardon you, sparing your lives. But this we do on the one condition, that you instantly leave these shores, and return no more. You have witnessed the power we wield. Go!"

The severely stern manner of this utterance by angel, goddess, witch or siren, was such as demanded obedience. It augured possession of supernatural powers which mortals had better leave unchallenged.

In the blanched faces of his followers, Master Gogol could discern no trace of further fight; neither could he stir his own chilled blood to warmth.

Brave as these warriors were, they had no

[1] Mammon, the serpent and goddess of gain, was known by the Atlons only as Mam, by which we may infer that these women were Atlons.

heart to cope with wizardry such as that from which they had so narrowly escaped. So, with downcast mien and bowed heads, at their leader's bidding, they wheeled about and made a bee line for our vessel; and there, we who had been idle spectators of the scene, joined them. However much disappointed in our expectations, we were all glad again to be safe aboard ship.

But we had not entirely escaped the wizardry of this weird continent, as shall presently be seen. No sooner were we again far out at sea, away as we thought from this witch-haunted shore, than a great lull began, the air grew stifling and our sails became useless. There, far out upon the horizon could now be seen a single speck of cloud, and though only a mere dot, it brought to Master Gogol a feeling of great uneasiness.

In a little while that tiny speck had swollen into an ominous body of swiftly moving blackness, heading directly for our ship. Soon after, raving winds sprang like harpies out of the cloud and tore mercilessly at our sails, forcing our men to take down the last rag of them, and that with much peril to their lives. Before we had time to think, the whole sky had become one solid mass of black, enveloping us in a gloom so dense we could scarcely see an arm's length ahead. The feeble

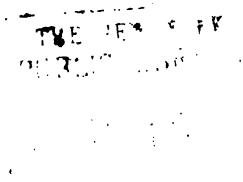
light of a few ship lanthorns and the lurid flashes of Jove's thunderbolts were all we had to guide our steps. By and by, timbers began to creak and groan, and anon tall masts came crashing down upon us, killing not a few; while over the deck swept mountainous waves making it perilous for even our stoutest men to remain.

In the awful crash of elements, our frail vessel was a mere egg shell, cracked and leaking from so many pores as to be beyond repair. How she tossed and reeled! I shall never forget the manner in which we were tumbled about. Advancing like a huge leviathan with open jaws, came the flood of waters hungering to swallow ship and all. To longer remain aboard, was to court certain death.

With Master Gogol and many others, I now desperately sprang overboard, hopeless of survival. Well for me now were the lessons in swimming I had received; for these enabled me to breast the waves until able to clutch a floating spar, to which I clung for dear life.

While thus floating, I bethought me of the poor galley slaves, chained to their benches, in the hold of the sinking vessel. Who now but the gods could rescue them from their peril? At the very moment, the vessel seemed to split asunder and sink from view, taking my breath with its sud-

"Advancing like a huge leviathan with open jaws, came the flood of waters hungering to swallow ship and all. To longer remain aboard was to court certain death."



denness. So ended the career of these desperate men, after having suffered full penance for their crimes; and who knows how many of them had been more sinned against than sinning!

All night long was the spar bearing me tossed heedlessly by the mad waves, dashed mercilessly against the rocks with which the shoreward waters abounded. How my bruised limbs ached, till utter exhaustion drove me into a sleep hovering twixt life and death, and which a mere breath might turn either way.

## CHAPTER III

### Beyond the Wider World

Little the worse was I for the scratches and bruises I had received in the tempest of the previous day. I was now lodging in the home of a physician named Gomar, who had attended me after my rescue on the waterfront of the city of Atlic, in the land of Atlo—a part of the continent of Atlantis.

I had passed beyond that wider world I had so much longed to see, and of which I had enjoyed a few glimpses. . . But here in this new world my stay was to be brief, unless I chose to become a permanent resident, forever renouncing the world I had left behind. It was an impossible demand, though tempered with the assurance that if I remained I would be admitted to Atlon citizenship and endowed with an Atlon's due share of inalienable property.

To many persons the offer would have been irresistibly tempting, since such liberality was a thing unheard of. In all other lands, arriving as I did, I should have been either held for ransom, or else sold into bondage.

It was for this reason a very handsome offer, though to me appearing meanly inadequate. How could I renounce home and kin and country, and also my princely fortune and rank—each a separate jewel above compare with the gift they offered?

In no other way could I view the alternatives given me, until my host, the physician harboring me—talking to me in his quaint mask of Aramaic, from which our Phoenician had been derived—managed to open my eyes.

It was marvelous, the way his few simple words shattered all my previous conceptions! What a blight they cast upon my former world, making it now seem, in my eyes, a vast den of thieves—an abode of horrors!

What a pickpocket's tool my host made of Mam's maxim, with which, until this day, I had been so enamored! He made me see how the myriads of shekels had passed from the pockets of the people into a few bulging hoards; and how, in failing to return, they had kept strong hands shackled for want of hire and tables bare for want of bread—the beast of hunger meanwhile gnawing at the vitals of the people. Each hoarded shekel had been a separate wolf at the toiler's door—invisible, but to all inmates an ever-present

apparition—a ghostly vampire sucking at their blood, till pallid faces and furrowed brows, and hollow eyes, bespoke its presence in language more eloquent than words.

In all my previous days had such sights confronted me, though I heeded not. For my heart was then hard with class arrogance, accepting the sad lot of the many as a thing that had to be, like rain and cold and storm. Besides, had they not courted this doom by multiplying so fast? Would not better fare lead them to breed the faster, and so defeat the object aimed at? Did not our wise men so teach, by way of caution? Did not the path of wisdom lie in keeping them well curbed; with a strong ruling class in power, to maintain peace and order?

But it had not at that time been shown to me how the hoarding of the shekels deprived men both of work and bread; and often even of life. I had not yet seen it, save as an innocent practice, leading to higher rank and station. I had never dreamt it had bred famines and swept whole regions like flies to death, unburied and unmourned. I had believed all famines were due to negligence or chance, never suspecting any of them due to the neglect of the rich to do their share of spending!

Well enough I realized, our class did enormous

spending; but that had been out of the lesser part of their income, while adding ever more and more to their unspent hoards. All were alike spurred on to this course by the spirit of cupidity; holding their hoards back, till the pressure of want was sufficient to compel the grant of their terms—a return of the principal with interest added. . . . . Through this dire pressure they made a gambling hell of trade, and a treadmill out of toil. The shekels reached not; the work reached not; and in all ranks raged bitter strife, along with woeful failures and broken lives. From all sides despair hurled men into the mires of depravity and crime.

The hoarded shekels were a strangling rope around the neck of the poor, keeping them forever on the rack of poverty—choking them till driven into premature graves.

As in a stupor, so lived the toilers on, from century to century—a life depressed, distorted, bestialized—at far intervals waking up to a vague realization of the degradation to which they stood condemned; and then, in these momentary fits, they tore down thrones and toppled dynasties, deposed political parties and factions—raging till their fever of destruction subsided, and again they bent their backs under the eternal yoke, without having struck a blow at the throne of Mam, queen of the hoarding world.

The very thought of this new aspect of my former world caused me to shudder. What a ghastly mockery it made of my princely state! Should I now return, how was I to face the accusing eyes of the outraged multitudes, whose voiceless sorrow would lash my soul like knives gashing at my flesh!

Were that which I had but now learned the real truth, which, in my heart of hearts, I was unable to deny, how could I return to my former world? Had I not rather walk into some seething furnace, than face its horrors?

To discard my fortune, and seek there an honest livelihood was unthinkable on Sidon terms. Rather were I a dog, than bow beneath the yoke of toil in Sidon.

Should I return, and teach there the lesson I had here learned? That also was unthinkable. My own class, even my father, would be so bitterly envenomed against me, I would be stoned to death. Why, even the toilers had among them too many belly-crawling wretches who, for the smallest drippings from the fleshpots of the rich, would make an end of me!

Could it be that my mind had become fettered in some spell of enchantment? Could it be possible my physician host was gifted with powers of

wizardry, with which he was deluding me? Perhaps to make a jest, or to punish me for my trespass upon these shores? Was I not, in his eyes, one of the pirate crew that had sought to raid this coast? Had they not seen into my heart—a thing easy for wizardry to do? And were they not now, perchance, toying with me, to rack my mind with torture, before administering the final blow avenging my offense?

But how unjust it was of me to look with suspicion upon the host who harbored me under his roof, and whose bread he shared with me? What an ingrate I was!

Was ever mortal placed in stranger position? Did appearances ever seem so hard to believe, and yet so difficult to disbelieve? Yet, upon the reality of my newly-formed belief, my entire future hung in the balance.

And now, reflecting upon the glowing colors in which my host had depicted the wonders of my new Atlon world, the thought came to me, what if all this dazzling brilliance were but the trumpery of a conjuror's tricks? I had heard of men capable of so working upon men's minds as to cast before their eyes such visions as they chose. And this man, the physician Gomar, what knew I of him, whom, till the previous day, I had never set eye on?

Well for me it was I had been given a whole month in which to determine my course. The spell of wizardry, if such it was, might by that time have lost its power, leaving my mind free and unclouded. I had never been one of that narrow-gauge sort that rebels at rising above the rut in which most minds travel. I well realized that the most improbable things were not for that reason impossible. Why then might not all my host had depicted be true to the very letter?

Joining my host at the evening repast, I was introduced to the members of his family, consisting of Mafra, his spouse, and Metel, his daughter. The meal was quite novel, consisting mainly of nutritious cereals and vegetables prepared in a manner making them strange to my palate, though so highly relished I had to have my dishes refilled more than once. Delicious fruits and condiments were also offered, while of flesh naught was served —being a form of food Atlons rarely used.

Mafra, or Mother Mafra, as she was usually addressed, was of middle age, prepossessing, tall, and of light complexion. Though inclined to austerity, she held in reserve an elastic mood tinged with a dry humor, indicating breadth of mind.

The daughter, Metel, was a bright damsel of

perhaps sixteen summers, slender, of medium height, and vivacious. Of her mother's light complexion, her mood was livelier. She was an adept at the harp, and a graceful dancer, who lacked not admiring suitors.

Physician Gomar was a tall man, of regular features, wearing glasses over his eyes. His high forehead and modulated voice bespoke both intelligence and culture.

Our repast over, we spent a delightful evening in conversation about the two worlds we represented; and what I gleaned therefrom only sharpened my appetite for more knowledge concerning this novel world. Before retiring, I had the promise of my hosts to accompany me on the morrow upon a jaunt through the city, enabling me to see with my own eyes all the things I so much wondered at.

## CHAPTER IV

### ATLIC, THE WONDERFUL

ACCORDING to promise, my hosts were out early the next day, escorting me to the leading places of interest.

Go in any direction, Atlic's long avenues presented the appearance of an extended, uninterrupted park, shaded, lawned, paved, and embellished with every imaginable attraction. Not even Athens could boast cleaner thoroughfares or walks less obstructed; for upon these avenues neither vehicles nor beasts of burden ever intruded. . . . Here immense trees spread their rich foliage over the heads of pedestrians, and canopied benches offered them shade and rest, when wearied. As we strolled on the fine walks, we passed between beds of flowers smiling in every dainty hue, and marble statues posing in every attitude of grace and vigor. And there were no end of tinkling fountains, whose merry notes mingled with those of the birds overhead.

But all this served only as background to the myriads of cheerful people we encountered on all

sides, gaily absorbed in lively conversations, whose sweet cadence poured like music into one's ears. What model features, beaming with intelligence; and what graceful charm there was in their every move!

Even their dress, so varied one could characterize it by no single style, exhibited a taste seldom to be met. Their garments seemed to be part of their very bodies, so did they harmonize with the peculiarities of each wearer.

Fully as graceful and lithe of limb as Athenians, were these Atlicans, and a half a head taller. Passing amongst them, I seemed to be moving among gods, and not mere mortals. This alone was enough to stamp my environment as that of another world.

And while we everywhere met these cheerful groups, nowhere did we encounter any crowds. What was still more striking, was the uniform good will visible on all sides. Not a suggestion was there of classes such as scowled at one another in the streets of other cities. How different from the scenes in which our mounted Sidon nobles had to force their way through mobs in the narrow streets, preceded by ruffians using vile epithets and clubs to part the crowds. . . . Nor passed we anywhere between musty shops and their heaps of wares piled in front of them, with boisterous

criers shrieking their praises, and anon with smooth-tongued importunities enticing wayfarers in. Neither heard we the jangling clamor of tireless tongues, higgling in every doorway.

Throughout the entire length of each avenue also ran a smooth-trimmed hedge beyond which, four cubits lower, hidden from view, ran the street, crossed at intersections by stout bridges and reached from basement floors and station stairways upon the avenue.

It was a strange sight, looking down upon a street from an avenue bridge, to behold the numerous queer vehicles called jubros whizzing by like so many phantoms, noiseless, and more wondrous still—self-propelled!

I was perfectly dumbfounded by the mystery of this uncanny demonstration. I would have been ready to believe the vehicles inhabited by genii, or other supernatural beings, but for the explanation given by my good host, that the power driving them was one generated through the burning of a fluid, called Atlene, so named after the Sun God AT, and obtained from a mountain lake daily kissed by that great deity to renew its inflammability. It then occurred to me that it must have been the spray from this liquid, that had been afire, and had so alarmed Shipmaster Gogol and his men.

The almost noiseless gliding of these strange chariots, my host informed me, was due to an elastic substance placed over their wheels, made from the sap of a tree originally brought to Atlo from a world far to the west, called Nameless Land.

But silent as were these Atlon chariots, they could emit noises upon occasion, enough to freeze one's blood. These they emitted as signals for slower-paced vehicles in their way to turn aside.

Along the avenue sides rose immense detached buildings, stately and impressive, called oros, each of which housed many families. They were faced with brick and stone, in variegated colors, and supplied with glistening windows, curtained within, and hung with canvas awnings. Each family had its separate quarters, while a portion was kept apart for common use, called the oroto. In this portion they met one another in a social way, making it a broader parlor or club room.

In the heart of the city, the entire area was given up to public structures, both of the municipality and the State, Atlic being the capital of Atlo. These were all palatial buildings, of polished marble, with inlaid floors and tapestried walls. Such magnificence was nowhere else to be seen. They were not as majestic as the Athenian

temples, nor faced with such imposing arrays of massive pillars, nor as colossal in stature as temples I had seen upon the Nil; but apart from their superior elegance, they contained features of utility making them far surpass all others.

Permitted to mount to the roof of one of these edifices, I had a splendid view of the entire city, spreading out to the endless sea on the north, and on the south to a dark line of low hills crossing the horizon. Running parallel with the sea coast was a long silver streak, the Atlic Canal, its bosom dotted with vessels that sped hither and thither with great speed. They were, like the jubros, Atlene-propelled, and were called jubrets. . . . . Upon either side of the canal, lined up innumerable wharves and warehouses, and not a few great factories overhung with clouds of smoke. It was a bustling district, the industrial heart of the city, as the palatial district was its civic center.

All the rest of the city was filled with tall oros, of uniform height, with red-tiled roofs, grouped in squares facing its avenues, from which rose to the same level rows of tall tree tops, breaking the red squares of oro roofs with their bright green lines and giving the oro sections the appearance of a huge checker board spread out before the eye.

Conversing with the fair damsel, Metel, I asked her in what portion of the city its poor resided.

"We have no poor in Atlic," she replied, "nor in all Atlo. Yet your world, as I hear, fairly swarms with them? What a pity!"

"With shame I confess what you say is all too true," I retorted. "It is a brand of terrible incompetence, or else willful evil, on the part of our rulers."

Returning homeward in a jubro, I was given fresh cause for marvel, seeing with what precision this automatic beast was driven and controlled.

Arrived home, our party separated, Metel to do some shopping, and her father to attend his professional business. So it fell upon Mother Mafra to show me through the interior of their oro.

Passing from floor to floor, she drew my attention to the splendid condition in which the building was kept, and also to its attractive ornamentations. One after the other, she then drew my attention to its unique equipments, explaining the use of each. In the number and variety of these no Sidon palace could compare.

How my eyes bulged when, down in the basement floors, I beheld the amazing store of choice household supplies and provisions, all carefully

spread on trays and racks, and all exposed to ample ventilation in the soft glare of Atlene lamps. And all this I was informed constituted but a moiety of their stores—the remainder being kept in oro warehouses from which these stores were daily replenished. . . . All these supplies, moreover, were already paid for, and a large quantity of undelivered materials one-half prepaid. . . . . They made most of their purchases from cooperative shops and factories, and also from cooperative groups of husbandmen, with rarely a dealer to intervene. All the cost of this great profusion also embodied no more than that of the labor entering into their making and delivery.[1]

In the family quarters of Mother Mafra, I was shown their stores of napery and table ware, of which there seemed to be enough to last for generations—all of excellent texture, and much of it ornamented with embroidered designs. Not even my mother, Folka, could boast such an outfit. . . In another chamber I was shown the wardrobes of each member of the family—a display the proudest nobles in my world could hardly equal in quality and variety. What gowns and

[1] One might, from these remarks of Mother Mafra, easily be misled into assuming that the Atlons had in operation some form of Socialism. Yet nothing were further from the truth, as later information will amply demonstrate; for nowhere was private property so fully developed and shielded.

cloaks, tunics, kaftans, breeches, sacques, jackets, head gear and foot gear, besides the infinite variety of soft, delicate underwear, were here spread out upon its broad sliding racks, which lay so convenient of access, enclosed in the massive wardrobes.

On the floor above, we visited the oroto—the social section of the oro. Here were spacious assembly rooms devoted to dances, theatricals, lectures, ceremonials and all purposes requiring assemblage. Here also were reading rooms and a library, separate gymnasiums for each of the sexes, and a series of parlors in which to indulge in conversation or in games and pastimes. . . . Every oro also had its spare rooms for guests, a sick ward, and a nursery in which little ones were cared for in the absence of their guardians. . . . . Each had also an immense court on the interior, in which the smaller oro children romped and revelled.

Such was the oroto and its adjuncts—the broader parlor into which the individual parlors of private quarters opened, making of the oro residents a broader family group. Within its precincts, only real distinctions counted—actual merit, to which all showed deference. Pretensions based on birth, or deceit of any kind, were here

so frowned upon that it was folly to endeavor to make use of them.

Returning to our quarters, my hostess assured me that what I had here seen, whether within the oro, or outside in Atlic, was to be met with in all parts of Atlo—in city, town or in its rural districts, where isolated oros and small groups of them took the place of villages. Everywhere, the men owned the outfits of their occupation, and the women the homes, all of which were so conducted as to be made inalienable. Through this scrupulous care of the people's properties, this land was free from the curse of poverty.

"That any land could possibly be blessed with such prodigious wealth," I confessed, "as what I have this day seen exhibited, is more than I would ever have believed; and even now, after having seen the palpable evidences of the marvel, my mind still seems to view it as a profound mystery —a work of wizardry, rather than the product of simple wisdom and industry."

"I do not wonder at the feeling of amazement, and the spirit of doubt that still mingles in your thoughts," my hostess replied, "but this very evening, after our repast and your needed siesta, the way in which we achieve these grand results will be fully explained, and its simplicity will be as great a surprise to you, as the marvelous tokens of our affluence."

## CHAPTER V

### The Wonder-Working Secret

My siesta over, I was ushered into a smug library, illumined by myriads of tiny jets softly sparkling from a dark velvety belt girdling the walls of the room. The material of which the belt was composed was incombustible, as were also the slender cords leading to the jets from jars of Atlene concealed in wall niches.

After a spell of preliminary conversation, in which all indulged, Physician Gomar began the promised revelation of the secret of Atlo's marvelous prosperity. . . . "You already understand, my young friend, the blighting effects produced in your Mamnist world by shekel-hoarding —how it produces on one side artificial scarcity of shekels and wealth, and on the other a monopoly of them, through which permanent dispossession and poverty become the lot of the masses, making their lives one endless reign of want and worry. . . . You realize all this so well, I need dilate no further on the horror."

"All my life," I interjected, "has this tragedy of the ages been playing before my eyes—this

visible symptom of a gruesome disease eating out the better part of man—a sort of leprosy—a disease incurable."

"Say not incurable," protested my host, "since its source is, by your own admission, well understood; and that is of itself half a cure. With this abomination of shekel-hoarding stopped, the cure follows of itself."

"But it seems to me, that to stop shekel-hoarding were as great a stumbling block as to find the cure. The one seems to me as impossible as the other."

"Far from being impossible, my dear friend," he suavely retorted, "the prevention of shekel-hoarding is already in Atlo AN ACCOMPLISHED FACT. You'll see it in operation here every day; and if you'll listen to Mother Mafra a few moments, she'll make the manner of its doing so clear to you, you'll be surprised at its simplicity."

Responding to this appeal, Mother Mafra began: "In Atlo everyone is obliged to spend FOR HIS LIVING every shekel he takes in—LEAVING NO CHANCE TO HOARD."

"It's plain enough that compelling men to spend all their shekels would make it impossible to hoard any. But who is to watch EVERYBODY, and see that ALL shekels are spent?" I protested.

"We take care of that, friend Loab, by using bronze shekels which each gets on paying out silver ones, and which each of us has to give on receiving any of silver, shekel for shekel. The recipient of silver shekels has not only to give the payer the articles paid for, but as many bronze shekels in addition. . . Were I to buy a hat for ten shekels, the seller would have to give me both the hat and ten bronze shekels. . . So it goes on from one person to the next, no one able to take in silver without giving bronze, or able to get bronze shekels without paying out silver ones. . . The bronze shekels being so necessary, EVERYBODY insists on getting them when paying out silver; so EVERYBODY compels EVERYBODY ELSE to keep on spending if they wish to keep on taking in any money. Everybody has to SPEND as much as he takes in. It's stop taking in, if you stop spending."

"At that rate," I conceded, "you have in every man and woman an officer of the law compelling the silver shekels to keep forever MOVING ON, since no one wants to really stop taking in any more of them. A man's buying must here keep close pace with his selling, just as one's right leg has to keep close pace with his left. They can never get far apart."

"Our trade is always on the trot and in im-

mense volume—so different from what it had been in our Old Atlo, which was Mamnist. In those days everybody shunned buying as if it were a plague and courted selling with lying tongue and every artifice. Why? Because we were tacitly offering income-yielding fortunes to those who took in the most and spent the least. Behind every shekel one spent lurked the danger of being unable to replace it to bar from the door the wolf of hunger. This necessity to dread spending stifled industry and starved humanity. It retarded all development and turned into demons countless numbers who, had else been angels."

"A Mamnist philosopher," said I, "compared our earth to an insane ward in the scheme of the universe."

"If it's not the insane ward of the universe," she replied, "it must be an earthly Hades, whose tortures are presided over by old Sat himself."

"But if you spend ALL your shekels here for a living," I now asked, "how does a man manage to acquire any properties of his own? How did you manage to get any properties after making your shekels UNHOARDABLE?"

"To spend our shekels for a living does not prevent us from acquiring our own properties. To perpetuate the home is as much a living cost as to

replace your coat or shoes. So it is, to perpetuate the shop you work in, together with all its equipments. . . We help our people to acquire these by preventing the shekels needed for it from being diverted by shekel and property hoarders. . . The acquisitions we do not allow are those comprising a loanable surplusage of properties—properties having no other use than to be applied so as to yield an income through the mere fact of their possession—an income those have to contribute who have been left without properties of their own, as the very result of the hoarding by which acquisition of such surplusages of property is achieved."

"I see; what you forbid, is the acquisition of properties to be turned into PROFITEERING CAPITAL—the cumulative result of deficient spending, through which the masses become dispossessed and are forced to submit to the profiteering exaction of INTEREST on capital."

"Were we to permit the acquisition of profiteering properties, it would only open another outlet for accumulated hoards and render futile the use of bronze shekels. It would only revive both the opportunity and the incentive to shekel hoarding."

"But if the masses earned so little," I now asked, "and couldn't take in more than they spent,

I fail to see how they could have earned enough to have acquired properties. You can no doubt explain how it was done—something I will be glad to learn."

"Accompanying the introduction of bronze shekels, a liberal supply of which were given free to every toiler, we commandeered the surplus properties of our profiteering capitalists. . . In other words, we bought the properties from them on time for their respective operatives, to whom we turned over possession. . . We immediately assessed both their commercial and their real value—the former, as the basis for the portion each seller was to receive, after a common element of inflation was deducted—determined by the difference between the actual and the commercial value of the aggregate properties.

"The toilers were to pay for them in monthly instalments made for a period of ten years, and beginning a month after they took possession. . . . In order to evade forfeiting these payments the capitalists had to provide themselves with bronze shekels to give the payers, the acquisition of which necessitated spending proportionally. . . . The toilers, now able to earn what had previously gone into paying interest on capital, had an ample margin from which to pay the deflated body of capital, besides enjoying a far better living than before—

since, under the enormous increase in the volume of shekels now spent by the capitalists, labor prices rose proportionally.

"They suffered no longer by the delinquent spending of the profiteering capitalists and the artificial scarcity of demand for labor, but were making the capitalists make good all the previous delinquent spending—a colossal debt still due them. What had been wrested from them by deficient spending on the part of the profiteers was now being restored by making good the deficient spending, and thereby swelling instead of shrinking labor values."

"It seems strange, but capitalists had always been credited with being prodigious spenders?" I querulously remarked.

"Capitalists have always been large spenders, but only of shekels previously EXTORTED from toilers, either in INFLATED prices on monopolized wares, or else in UNDER-VALUED labor that had to be sold in the face of an extremely SHORT labor demand—a demand improperly shrunken by extensive shekel hoarding. The extorted shekels he spent, OTHER PEOPLE'S SHEKELS, made a demand for labor of the kind made by locust pests in devouring crops. They made a large demand for labor, but NOT for REMUNERATIVE

labor. . . . The toilers were given work, but no PAID work came to them through the spending done by capitalists. They in reality received only a portion of the work made by their own consuming; and for what they spent in paying the capitalist's extortions they received no compensation. The demand the capitalist made by spending shekels previously extorted was in reality a COUNTERFEIT labor demand just as the quantity of work it added was UNPAID work."

"I now understand," I joyously exclaimed. "While doing a prodigious counterfeit spending, they practically did no real spending, and you STOPPED their counterfeit spending and compelled them to make good their delinquent real spending. Artificially short labor demand and artificially short product supply had both been skinning toilers to the bone; and you reversed the conditions, giving the toilers a retributively long labor demand and retributively large earnings, by which to honestly wipe out the old score."

"I am very glad to see you so quick to grasp the situation, Loab. For the government to allow a counterfeit demand to be palmed off on the people was just as bad as if it had allowed the people to be cheated by skillful money counterfeiters. . . . We had many such cunning value manipulators circulating in the Old Atlo; and to

preserve their divine privileges, they were always dabbling in politics, and getting control of our government, and bringing it into disrepute. At last they became so brazen, it was no longer safe for one of them to remain in Atlo—they had made it so lawless."

"And now, suppose we drop the subject for today;" interposed Physician Gomar, "and if agreeable, we will go on with it tomorrow evening. What say you?"

"I am very thankful to you, friends," I responded, "for teaching me this valuable lesson that has so opened my eyes, I begin to see things in a new light. It will be a pleasure for me to be present at tomorrow's sitting."

And so we parted, after listening to a pathetic harp solo by Metel, and a recitation by her mother.

## CHAPTER VI

### An Hour in the Oroto

Together with Metel, I took a stroll the next morning through the bustling district of the canal front, lined with rattling factories and huge warehouses, between which plied innumerable jubrets laden with productions, either brought in from the outlying rural districts or sent out from the busy factories and destined for the cities and towns on and adjacent to the canal.

The factory warehouses contained few finished productions—these almost invariably being at once dispatched to oro warehouses, to be there held till called for by the respective oros. Only the materials entering into their productions were kept in the factory warehouses, but in large quantities; for factories always had large numbers of advance orders, one-half prepaid and the other half due on delivery; and all these prepayments enabled them to carry large stores of prepaid materials.

Observing a stout old man, in stepping out of a jubro, handing the driver a small coin, and re-

preserve their divine privileges, they were always dabbling in politics, and getting control of our government, and bringing it into disrepute. At last they became so brazen, it was no longer safe for one of them to remain in Atlo—they had made it so lawless."

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people of Atlo, knowing the benefits their use confers, would not do without them for ten times the inconvenience."

We lunched at Big Bear oro on our way, received as guests with every mark of attention and given a table to ourselves in its airy dining hall, spick and span and simple. Napery and dishes, service and viands were all above reproach.

"I imagined we were guests!" I remarked, on noting Metel handing out a coin on leaving.

"So we were," she explained. "But in Atlo we all chip in to meet the costs, as in a private picnic. Politeness itself would forbid either party to put the other out and make them appear parasites. So visitors always pay; but the oros never charge more than cost. They would resent an offer involving profits. I imagine in the Mamnist world, such conduct would be incomprehensible. . . . Why, a person having a good behavior card can travel from one end of Atlo to the other, and be received as a guest in any oro, remaining as long as he chooses, and paying them only cost. . . . In every oroto we are consequently meeting persons from other parts of the land; and so, traveling ourselves very much, we become thoroughly socialized. It makes of all Atlo one home, with one roof over our heads."

"But do not your homes lose in privacy by it?" I asked.

"On the contrary, they are made more private by it—friends all meeting in the orotos. Between the orotos and travel, we have so much change, it removes all friction in the private home."

Stopping on our return in Red Star oroto, we met two of Metel's friends, Lady Lorn and Lord Manko, whose titles, very common here, will soon explain themselves. I was introduced as a stranger, Prince Loab, of Sidon.

As a stranger in the land, my new friends were particularly attentive to me. Both being artists who painted in oil, I learned many things from them regarding the state of Atlon art in their line, while I communicated to them what I knew concerning art abroad.

Overhearing an aged person greet a friend here with the words "sholem oronoyo," which means "peace be your heritage," Lady Lorn, in a whisper, remarked, "A very antiquated greeting, coming down from our Old Atlo. We do less wishing nowadays, and far more doing; or rather, our new social order leaves us little more to wish for in the way of peace and prosperity."

"We were always wishing each other good

things," I declared, "in my Mamnist world; and to be given such wishes, was perhaps the nearest thing to the things themselves most of its people ever got."

"I'm glad I didn't live in the Mamnist world," interposed Metel. "Nothing would have sickened me more than the creeping, unreliable and unsteady course of its lordly shekel servants—I mean its silver shekels. It must have seemed as if men kept a supply of liquid glue in their pockets, and a shekel once getting in, could never again be detached. What a loafer and tyrant the shekel is, in that world—busy half the time turning the thumbscrews on industry by remaining idle, and the rest of the time making toilers miserable by robbing them through extortionate exactions!"

"When everybody resisted spending," added Lord Manko, "as if it were taking poison; and they were all ready to cut each other's throats in order to add to their sales, the commercial world must have been a madman's picnic. Could you think of anything at once more comical and tragical! The devil was surely at the head of affairs in that world!"

"One can imagine how stagnant trade was," explained Metel, "when the bulk of all productions had to lay for months and months and often years, detained in shops and stores and ware-

houses represented by an infinite number of middleman establishments interposed between factory and farm, and fireside—all at a devouring cost in shelfwear, storage, risks, handling and interest, besides the terrible cost of each separate selling in transfer from one dealer to the next—a ruinous cost that ate like filthy worms into the fruit of toil, leaving the toilers hardly the shadow of what should have been their share. . . . Father called this tedious and difficult progress of productions from producer to consumer a scourge of industrial indigestion. He said also it was accompanied with periods of greater severity which he classed as cases of acute indigestion. The latter were usually called periods of famine; so completely did industry seem blocked, leaving the people to starve and live by the bitter bread of charity!"

"Atlo for me," declared Lady Lorn, "with its shekels always on the go, and its productions moving at an irresistible and uninterrupted pace. Atlo for me, where the whole cost of transfer from producer to consumer, save of bulky wares, is seldom more than a moiety of five per cent of their cost of making, instead of taking two-thirds of the cost. Atlo for me, where everyone buys, and keeps on buying, to the very highest limit, so as to be able to keep on earning to the highest

limit of his capacity. . . . Atlo for me, where there is as much inducement to spend as there is to earn, and not a lopsided incentive to stifle trade by spending as little as possible, and to jostle each other with interminable strife and even bloodshed, so as to secure a larger portion of trade!"

"I have seen it recorded," said Metel, "that in our Old Atlo philosophers had advocated the doctrine that it was every man's right to buy as he pleased and to also sell as he pleased, without regard to his neighbor. Not even the State, urged these philosophers, had the right to interfere with this royal prerogative of the buyer. Think of such a doctrine being taught to human beings—a doctrine I would judge fit for pigs in a pig's Elysium!

"The doctrine was a subtle justification for shekel and wealth hoarding, and Profiteering Capitalism. It pleased the profiteering upper class, and no wonder they were fascinated with the works of the first philosopher who boldly advocated it."

"And as it botched the distribution of productions," added Lady Lorn, "so also did it botch the distribution of population, scattering men over a region tenfold as large as they needed, and trebling the cost of every step of travel or transporta-

tion made. For with their hoarded shekels they bought up great tracts of lands which they found they could keep and withhold for later prices and rentals yielding often much more than interest. . . . Wherever afterwards settlements arose, and social and industrial intercourse became easier, up went the prices of lands and rentals, so that on all sides it became a matter of indifference where settlers located—being obliged to either suffer the inconveniences of inferior location, or else the risen tax of the landholder. So, pell mell, they scattered to the four winds, and suffered a frightful wastage of labor and expense through the superfluous distances they had to cover. It seemed strange why so many would locate in marshy river bottoms or at the mouths of dangerous volcanoes, or in the wilderness depths a day's journey to their nearest neighbors. But such was the work of Profiteering Capitalism, with its marvelous enterprise in the work of blocking industry till its tax of interest was assured."

"Since we are picking the flaws in our Old Atlo conditions," added Lord Manko, "it may be well enough to consider the attractive fleshpots found in its enormous gross profit margins, out of which all sorts of commissions could be extracted by those gifted with the power in any way to divert trade. What a series of gold mines our former

legislators found in them, to trade against their power to divert the patronage of the State. What a lot of jackal statesmen it drew to the fleshpots, and what a fine lot of statesmen it made of these jackals. An honest man had no chance against the power of the fleshpots—so pressing was the strife of the jackal class to monopolize them; and surely, they could outbid any real statesmen. . . . Why, every great organization having patronage to dispense, even charitable and eleemosynary institutions, were subject to the depredations of this class. . . . Can you wonder that the Old Atlo was so corrupt, the smell tainted the atmosphere of the entire universe, all but the realm of our Sun-God, whose burning glory it could not penetrate!"

"Your Old Atlo, and the present Mamnist world," I declared, "were both subject to this dread industrial disease, whether indigestion or leprosy. It is well our new Atlo is rid of the disease. Its wonderful affluence, as I now see it, is merely an expression or manifestation of unimpaired health and unimpeded vigor. Its foundation is sound, and the whole structure is sound."

## CHAPTER VII

### Protected Private Property

Once more assembled in the library, to continue the instruction given me on the previous evening, at her father's request, Metel began by entertaining us with a sweet song she accompanied on the harp, a song full of melody and pathos.

Her father now informed me that all property in Atlo is so safeguarded by the State that every child inherits a due portion, accompanying its inheritance of the NEED of property as a shield to its liberty and a means of exemption from the subjection attending poverty under civilization. . . . As soon as a son arrives at the maturity implied in mastery of a trade, profession or other vocation, he is endowed with a property interest in the establishment to which he attaches his service; and this property becomes his, during active service—through it sharing in the earnings of the establishment, and having voice in determining its management. Such a portion each operative gets and holds, be the establishment one requiring large or small capital."

"At that rate, some inherit much more than others, do they not?"

"No; they really inherit alike, since the cost of original acquisition and constant perpetuation of plants involving larger outlay is collected by being incorporated *in the prices of the productions* of the plant, and is larger if the cost of the plant is larger. The public at large thus pays for it, while net earnings in all establishments are based on labor alone, under that fair competition which results when all elements of monopoly are removed."

"But such munificence on the part of the State, how is it possible?" I asked.

"It is no munificence on the part of the State;" came the reply, "for the cost, as I have said, is drawn out of the gross earnings of all establishments. The State is merely custodian of these funds, the trustee in charge of them—in this manner fulfilling its obligation to see that the property is handed down safely, and duly enlarged, from one generation to the next. Through this custody, the property is really made INALIENABLE. Through this care, no one can make use of a surplusage of property, there being none dependent on its hire, and no gain to be derived from its acquisition—granted that were possible. . . . With all people duly equipped with their

portion of productive property, there is no chance for profiteering properties, even if the State were base enough to lend its protection to them."

"You then make the validity of property rest entirely on the PRODUCTIVE use made of it," I interposed. "You refuse to accept the stupid assumption so common in the Mamnist world that a person may do as he will with his own property —a very dangerous doctrine, that would allow one to stab his fellows if done with his own dagger; and by analogy, it is right to deny protection to property for uses inimical to the welfare and security of our fellow men. Neither can it knowingly countenance such uses of money—once understood how to prevent them."

"You are right, Loab, as to the obligations of the State. Productive property, the need of which every child of civilization inherits, cannot be allowed to be diverted into the hands of greedy and heartless profiteers. The society that cannot protect its unborn from such depredators, should blush indeed."

"But how were it," I finally asked, "if owners sold their property, squandering the money received for it?"

"That is made impossible through the fact that in all property transfers, the money paid to the

seller is merely transferred from the buyer's account to that of the seller, always remaining in custody of the State—all but the small margin left when the purchase of a new property costs less than what was realized from that sold—happening only when the stock of a concern is above par, through superior management whereby like labor in the one establishment can produce more than in others of the same character. Should such a balance remain in favor of the seller, it is given him, and he is at liberty to do with it as he wishes. But if the sale leaves a deficiency, he is obliged to make it good through a deficiency tax levied on his earnings until it is made good."

"It is very important then for the co-operatives to select able managers, is it not?"

"The management of a co-operative under Atlism is so easy that they encounter small difficulty in securing capable men for the position. The atmosphere of Atlon trade is so completely void of sharp practices; of having to give credit; of having to spend fortunes in securing trade; of having to speculate as to what is to be made, in what style and in what quantities, to serve the whims of a fickle public; of necessity to compete against untold volumes of obstructive capital and for securing loans and credits in markets unduly restricted. With their orders received from

samples and catalogs; placed far in advance; and half prepaid, with the rest to be paid on delivery; how much easier it is to manage a business! They have really no risks to assume; and besides, we have under the State a Push Wing to steer all enterprises involving any hazard. Of this peculiar branch of government, you will hear enough before long."

"I presume your property in homes or oros is all handled on the same principle?" I queried.

"With slight modifications," responded Mother Mafra, "the same principles are applied. Every woman, upon marriage, is dowered with stock in an oro proportional to the quarters she is to occupy; and in addition she is endowed with an income for family maintenance, subject to increase as the family becomes larger. Out of this income, however, the State withholds enough to cover the cost of oro wear and reconstruction—a portion set aside and kept in State custody for repair and reconstruction of the oro, when needed."

"But how comes the State to provide the home with an income?" I asked in astonishment at such unheard of munificence.

"The State regards woman as a worker in the subsistence-producing co-operation of industrial society, and takes it upon itself to see that this in-

come is placed in her hands as something her very own, due her as head of the household. It is not to be withheld as a bludgeon through which to make her a household drudge." [1]

"That makes woman here the queen of the home," I suggested.

"Even as man is lord of the workshop. The State shields him from the dispossessing tactics of the profiteering capitalist; and why not woman from the drudgery of dispossession in the home? . . . Oh no, we are not allowed here to approach the altar, bowed down with dependence and want, and forced to mate ourselves under a yoke. Freedom of the heart is regarded as an indispensable requisite to real marriage. Men and women are not to be mated like dogs and slaves."

"Your oros in their entirety are then a co-operative concern?" I asked.

"Like any other co-operative, save that the private homes remain private. We elect our

[1] As custodian also of the children of school age, whose studies are real work and in the long run materially promote the volume of future production, woman is the rightful claimant to the pay due for this labor. Though its results are remote, it is no less productive labor than is the plan made by the architect for the grand edifice completed years after. In any honest system of industrial co-operation all contributors of productive service must be recognized and rewarded, whether directly or through their natural custodians.

manager, or Oro Mother, who appoints her aids and engages what help is needful. For many years I served in that capacity; and it is for that reason I am still called Mother Mafra. In the oroto we are addressed as Lord Gomar and Lady Mafra."

"And is your oro stock also transferable?"

"Just as stock in any other concern. We can change residence as easily as men can change their co-operatives. It occasions little trouble and scarcely any loss—nothing like the loss home owners in the Mamnist world suffer by change of residence."

The more I contemplated, the more convinced I became that the world held no other land like Atlo. In this land throve an UNPERVERTED CAPITALISM that put to shame the Profiteering Capitalism of the Mamnist world. Here money was not allowed to make itself master of man. Here property—the capital needed by the toiler—was made INALIENABLE—a sacred heritage, of which the unborn were not to be deprived. Here man was truly made FREE, and woman, his mate, EQUALLY FREE. This was the land for me. Here would I stay. I would adopt Atlo as my future home; and so I finally reported to my hosts.

"Nothing, friend Loab," replied my host "would please me more than to have you remain; but before you make your resolve final, I beg you to listen, while I tell you of the darker side of Atlo's outlook. . . . Having supplanted Mam's hoardable shekel, and done away with Mamnist profiteering, we have aroused the ire of the Evil One, who is now designing to destroy our people through an invasion by beasts from Atlora—all so as to wipe from the earth every vestige of Atlism. . . . It is such a war of extermination with which we are today menaced, and whose dangers will confront you if you remain. I beseech you, therefore, to think well before making your decision final."

"The very peril, friends, that confronts Atlo," I replied, "impels me to remain here, contributing what little I can to the defense of Atlo and Atlism. Not for the world would I see the knowledge of Perfected Capitalism become lost to the world. Count me henceforth an Atlon to the core—one of its defenders to the very last."

## CHAPTER VIII

### Atlo's Wonderful Push Wing

A week had passed since my advent in Atlo, and now I was a proud citizen of this wonderful State, owning a portion of stock in the Gloria Garment House, hired by its manager, after demonstrating to him my ability to be of service.

Reporting my hire, the State paid for my interest in the establishment on a par basis. Had the stock been above par, I would have had to make good the deficiency by a series of drafts taken from my regular earnings; and on the contrary, had it been below par, the deficiency would have been made good to me.

I was now entitled not only to my twenty shekels wage per week, but also to a monthly dividend drawn from the surplus earnings of the Gloria, varying some, though in the long run amounting to fully as much as the wages. . . . Should either the manager or myself at any time be dissatisfied, we were privileged, on giving a reasonable notice, to part. . . . The State would be notified, and the value of my portion transferred to its custody, to be paid over to my next employer,

deviations from the par of stock of the new concern having to be made good, as was done on hiring to the Gloria.

My work in the Gloria was to design patterns, in doing which my experience abroad made up for much that, as a beginner, I was deficient in. . . . A full day called for three two-hour shifts, and a full week for five days' work.

Each of us was assigned two days each week for rest and recreation, on which we were forbidden to work. The days were so assigned that we always had a force at work on each of the seven days. This practice is maintained in all establishments, enabling all persons to be served at all times, and obviating the crowds and rushes and inadequate service and overwork usually attending popular recreation wherever all seek rest and recreation on the same day.

Though in Sidon considered a man of some stature, I ranked here only as of medium height—Atlons averaging half a head taller than our Sidonians. They were also larger minded, as well as larger in body, evidenced by their jovial spirit and the rarity of losing their temper, as well as by the wit apparent in the high standards prevailing on all sides. . . . Their great superiority, in fact, represented the latent powers

and forces liberated by Atlism and fettered under Mamnism. They displayed no inheritance of morbid appetites—thirst for strong drink or craving for opiates, or any other tokens of the deficiencies left by periods of hunger and exposure and abuses indulged from the feeling of despair and abandonment bred under Mamnist conditions. They were all free from these ugly fetters, and showed it in their erect walk and manly ways.

If one thing more than any other caused me to feel my utter inferiority to the Atlon, it was the sight of a group of them—men and women—engaged in one of their charming picture dances.

How these dances displayed the graces of figure and form in the ever-changing attitudes assumed, and the perfect pose by which they appeared to move as if without the slightest effort —the entire group swerving in one continuous symphony, in perfect harmony with the music, as if all were parts of a single living organism. . . . Words cannot depict the charm of these pictures, in which every look and every muscle were blended into one grand work of art. It was a dance fit for the gods. . . . What hope then had I, with my unmusical ear and my unwieldly, awkward limbs, to ever succeed in mastering it?

Yet in spite of my seemingly overwhelming defects, was I daily urged by Metel, with wistful

looks, to make a desperate effort at its mastery. I knew she delighted in the dance, in which she was an expert; and spurred by her urging, I launched into the endeavor, supported in it by her great faith in me. Come the very worst, I would give her pleasure; and that realization made me laugh at the smiles my awkwardness inevitably provoked.

Sauntering together one day through a shady avenue, we spoke of conditions at the Gloria, in which I was now an active partner, and in which she took a lively interest.

"Orders at the Gloria," I informed her, "are pouring in faster than we can turn them out; and we have already enough orders on hand to keep us going for the next six months. No one expects we will ever catch up. . . . Then, how my eyes bulge to see them come in—all one-half prepaid, with the remainder due on delivery. How different all this is from the tediously slow and dubious course of income in the Mamnist world! Ah, that's what I call business—real business!"

"We have our bronze shekels to thank for all this," my companion responded. "These bronze shekels are so many drivers behind the silver ones —each with whip in hand to spur them on at a tireless speed and a ceaseless run. The need of

the bronze, so as to earn to our fullest capacity, keeps us spending—ever spending to the limit. . . . There's always more in sight, and so we never hesitate at spending. Spending? Is it not all for our living in the fullest sense—all for our living? Then the more we spend the more we live. Why, to stint seems to us half like suicide. It's a sin—perhaps a crime. . . . And besides, is not all work—all opportunity to earn—the product of spending? Did we not spend, how much work were there? And to whom should our work all go, if not to those who MAKE it by their spending? If men spend nothing, what need have they of work; and what work are they, who make none, entitled to? Is there any to spare save for its makers?"

"Surely not, if all makers are each to secure their due portion," I answered. "That's just where your bronze shekels come in. They're each holder's proof of work-making and his claim on a proportionate amount of the output of work. . . . They are really the DISTRIBUTING medium for all work, just as the silver shekels are the DISTRIBUTING medium for all productions—the holders of silver shekels having them as their proof of having proportionally contributed to the product output, which is therefore exclusively reserved for them."

"You've put the thing admirably," was the reply. "I'm sure it could not have been stated better. It's just because there are in reality TWO outputs—one of work, and one of the products of labor—to be distributed, and in the Mamnist world only ONE distributing medium, that it is so sickly and filled with disorder and violence. It is just as if a human body, needing heart and lungs were furnished with only one of these, and left to eke out a painful existence with it."

"To change the subject, Metel," I suggested, "can you explain why our Sidon co-operatives—the few we had of them—met with no better success than other enterprises, though they looked forward to achieve wonders through them?"

"They erred greatly in failing to see that the shop co-operation they exalted was already in force in all other shops, and that they were as subject to Mamnist handicaps as other enterprises. Their shop-wide co-operation escaped none of the malign influences of Mamnist capital—accumulated in vast excess, and half of its great volume being merely capitalized powers of extortion arising from social negligence and privilege, and causing the conduct of all business to require double and treble and fivefold the amount of capital otherwise needed; also magnifying the risks involved, and multiplying the difficulties to contend

with—particularly that of disposing of wares. It did not exempt them from the tax of interest levied by all this capital, nor from the ruin so often inflicted by the industrial crises it periodically precipitated through its insupportably excessive accumulations."

"Even without a work-distributing medium," Metel resumed, "the Mamnist co-operation was far superior, being STATE-WIDE in its scope. Through its use of money and competition—such use of these as it made—it united farm, factory and fireside, producers and consumers, throughout all Atlo, into a single industrial organism. It gave a SUPERIOR co-operation in a PERVERTED FORM; and the petty shop-wide co-operative institutions all benefited by it, and were also limited in their capacity by its want of a work-distributing medium."

"Then the greater success of your Atlon co-operatives may be attributed," said I, "to the fact that your STATE-WIDE co-operation is an UNPERVERTED one. It operates with both a work distributing and a product distributing medium. In that, it is a PERFECTED Capitalism, relieved of all obstructive and profiteering influences. It towers over all Mamnist and substitute forms of industrial organization like a giant among pigmies."

Passing on from one avenue to the next, a curious feature drew my attention—the fact that the initial letters of their respective names ran in alphabetical order. Beginning from the heart of the city they also ran in series, the first having names of only one syllable, the next words of two syllables, the next of three syllables, and so on. . . . Thus they started with Arch avenue, following with Bear avenue, Card avenue, Dell avenue, and so on, to the last letter of the alphabet; and after that started over with two syllable names and so on. Metel informed me that the object of this way of naming avenues was to enable men to know locations from the mere name of the avenues. It was surely a great help, especially to strangers.

"With all your thoroughfares at right angles to each other; so clean and broad and shady; and so named, a stranger is able at once to locate any of them; you have model cities, indeed. How disgusted I should now be to go back to the crooked, narrow and dirty streets of Mamnist cities, in most of which women durst not venture; nor well dressed men, unless bearing arms. I tell you, I wouldn't change places with the proudest emperor there!"

"An ancient adage has it, 'better a hovel of health than a palace of pestilence.' "

"There was one feature of Mamnism," I remarked, "our merchants were never tired of lauding—their great credit system. Had you such a system in your Old Atlo?"

"It followed Mamnism everywhere, as heel follows toe. Mercantile pride everywhere made much of it. It was an aggregation of discrepancies, growing and growing and growing; for Mamnist leaks of discrepancy were constantly patched at a cost in new discrepancies, larger than the old. The terms on which credit was given always involved the necessity of a profit return; and the failure to spend more than a fraction of the profits created fresh discrepancies. So the volume of discrepancies was always kept swelling, save in the time of an industrial crisis, when its volume shrank, and the patching of discrepancies ceased—in short, when credits suddenly disappeared, and the big credit system dwindled into a shadow."

"The entire credit system, as I now see it," I declared, "was a foul growth springing from the unrestrained shekel hoarding in vogue. It was the evil symptom of a vicious practice. What delusions possessed the commercial world, to praise it so!"

"They also called it the corner stone of trade," my companion added. "Father says the mercan-

tile world was always so starved, it could never have stood up without the stone to lean on."

"Let me tell you now about our great Push Wing," she followed, "—the branch of our government supplementing all our industrial undertakings and our social organization."

"Your father mentioned it to me, and I'm very anxious to learn more concerning it."

"I could hardly tell you all the varied things it does," she responded, "but fortunately I this morning found a summary of its work; and thinking you would be interested, I kept it with me. Shall I read it to you?"

"You can't begin too soon," I assured her.

"Then listen, Loab, and I'll read:

"The Atlon Push Wing is designed to foster new ideas, new inventions, new discoveries. It aims to promote the sciences and arts in all their branches. . . . Its work is also to educate the people for the life they are to lead, providing for all an elementary training in the rudiments of learning and of all general work. It also offers a special education for each in such fields as they may desire to enter, in trades, professions or in the labors of statecraft.

"It promotes needful enterprises whose inauguration would involve risks, if privately under-

taken; turning them over to private enterprise, after proving themselves remunerative and established. It also promotes and conducts enterprises of a useful character that would be commercially unprofitable. If needed to keep up industrial and social progress, they are not neglected because of not being directly remunerative.

"The Wing also maintains a large force of salaried physicians, who serve their patients without direct cost to them, harassing no man's mind with the ghost of a large bill confronting him on recovery. . . . In every oro, also, it maintains a priest and a priestess, qualified physicians, who keep the inmates informed in matters relating to the preservation of their health—the body being regarded as one of AT'S most sacred temples —the structure within which each soul meets its god and hears his voice speaking in conscience. In emergencies these oro priests treat patients, pending the arrival of the regular physician.

"The Wing also supplies with regular annuities all persons permanently disabled or incapacitated.

"We have one branch of the Wing that devotes itself to territorial expansion of town, city and of Settled Atlo. Of course, we have no land speculation to foster a promiscuous scattering of population by raising prices everywhere to a point neutralizing local advantages by the exaction of

proportionally higher rentals and land prices; but what we do is to limit the radius everywhere within which settlements may expand. We then proceed to put in every kind of desirable improvement, whose cost falls, not on a sparse settlement, but on one so well peopled as to make the cost to each settler very light. In expanding the territory of Atlo, we clear the necessary lands, and also drain and irrigate so far as necessary, giving settlers improved lands and plenty of near neighbors from the very start.

"The Wing also exercises the greatest care for toilers in all walks, even providing temporary pensions in case of a trade being revolutionized by the introduction of new labor-saving machinery. It supports the workmen till able to fit themselves into a new occupation. . . . At the time Atlism was introduced, it even pensioned for life capitalists of advanced years, thus giving to these men a longer period than ten years in which to spend their capital. As capitalists, they were, of course, amply able to pay for these pensions.

"A special branch of the Wing is constantly searching to ascertain what new needs or wants the public may have, whether material, political or social—in fact, of any kind whatsoever. After due consideration, these are all gratified so far as deemed advisable.

"A branch also supervises the trades and professions, each of which is regulated by rules and codes of its own devising, but subject to the approval of the Wing, which is also their court of final appeal.

"Another branch keeps a vigilant eye on officials in every department of the government, prosecuting them vigorously for every form of dereliction, from usurpation of power to misapplication of trust funds. . . . The reconstruction funds are particularly watched; though, if properly applied, they are so rapidly absorbed in reconstruction as to accumulate only in comparatively small amounts. The real fund is in the properties themselves."

"I am glad to see Atlons did not fall into the error so common in other States," I remarked, "that assumes the industrial system, equipped with money and competition, is self-sufficient; and that it also wisely leaves to private enterprise all those functions it is capable of performing as well or better than if done by the State. This minimizes the task of the State and helps to make it more effectually accomplished."

"It is impossible to recall all the varied works done by the Wing," my companion resumed, "but along with others it provides us with a means of

saving up for exceptionally large outlays, such as the purchase of a private jubro or making an extended traveling tour. . . . All we have to do in such a case is to buy from the State a SAVINGS TICKET, for which we pay in instalments. With each instalment, we are given bronze shekels through which we can go on saving till the whole ticket is paid for. . . . In spending, we pay with coupons torn from the ticket till the ticket is used up. In spending the coupons we get no bronze shekels, having already had them paid us in buying the ticket; but the recipients of the coupons have to give bronze shekels to the State in having them cashed. . . . The savings tickets work nicely. Even our farm and other co-operatives occasionally use them."

On our homeward journey, I noted some small repair shops, and learned from my companion that these were each a part of a larger co-operative—a class of co-operatives each of which was managed according to its own peculiar needs.

What a vast superiority I could now see in Atlism! What a staggering and indelible impression it made upon my mind—the great immensity of its scope and the marvelous facility of its operations! What a contrast there was between its

protected properties and the profiteered properties of the Mamnist world! What a contrast between its orderly Perfected Capitalism and the disorderliness of the Profiteering Capitalism reigning abroad!

## CHAPTER IX

### The Gathering Cloud

Happy days were those of my first month in Atlic, sauntering along its beautifully parked avenues, or flying in jubros over its outlying rural districts, with an occasional ride over the Atlic Canal in one of its swift-gliding jubrets, with Metel at my side. Sometimes we went rowing, and often fishing, in the clear waters of this canal. . . . What wonderful visions were those, when the face of AT shot his blood red shafts across the heavens, painting earth and sky and sea and cloud in a thousand gorgeous hues, bespeaking his divine glory. How each feathery cloud blushed, as the Golden Faced One cast his glowing eye upon it! And well it might; for was not he ruler over heaven and earth?

What delightful evenings we also spent listening to brilliant lectures delivered in the oroto, or observing the progress of some drama in a play house. . . . How much more enjoyable they were to me, interspersed with intervals of earnest work in the Gloria. It taught me the lesson that all pleasures need seasoning with intervals of work

or pain of some sort. Unseasoned by vexations and disappointments, a very houseful of toys will not impart to little ones their pleasure-giving power. In their very midst, the child will burst into tears and bawl without apparent reason. . . . And the poor, neglected child often derives more pleasure from its shabby rag doll. It is madness in mortals to think pleasures may be expanded with possessions—that pleasure added to pleasure is more than shadow laid over shadow. . . . As if the pursuit of pleasures were any better than the vain practice of asceticism. But mortal mind is a madhouse of delusions, only by slow degrees passing into the fairer realm of freedom and sanity.

Visiting at her home one day, her mother joined us, in the course of conversation casually informing me that she was a seer of visions, who had often been visited in her dreams by the goddess Atl, consort of the Sun God AT. In such a dream my coming to Atlo had been announced, and my arrival afterwards had been a verification of its prescience.

"Last night had I another of these prophetic dreams—" she confided to me, "one of dreadful portent. In it, our fair land was being ravaged by horrid creatures, of vague form but gigantic stature, who carried on their depredations in every

portion of the land. I saw them clambering up our oro walls. I saw them breaking in. I saw them slaying and devouring our people. Oh, it was a terrible dream. It haunts me every moment."

"King Mozo is busy night and day," the seer resumed, "making every possible preparation for meeting the threatened invasion. Coming from Atlora, the peninsula to our west, the beasts are expected to approach through the isthmus of Long Neck. At that point we are already concentrating forces and constructing bulwarks calculated to bar their entrance. . . . But somehow I am overcome with a premonition that, in some unforeseen way, the beasts will effect an entrance and overrun the land."

"Expecting them to come," I suggested, "were it not well to barricade our oro windows and the doors also?"

"That will surely be done," she assured me, "since King Mozo is already aware of my strange premonition, and is taking steps to manufacture a vast number of steel bars suited for the purpose. To do this will take some time; and the danger is, we may be invaded before the preparations are complete."

Scarcely had she ceased speaking, when a strange alteration came over her; and leaning back

in her chair—her body rigid, and her features livid—she sat staring with a fixed and vacant gaze. Metel cautioned me at once to remain quiet, it being a trance from which her mother would soon be aroused.

Slowly the lips of the enthralled woman began to part; and in low, muffled tones, as if addressing an audience, she began speaking:

"Dark, moving figures fill the face of the land. It is at Long Neck. They seem to be, but are not human beings. They are of gigantic stature, covered with thick coats of hair, all jet black. Fangs of the tiger, eyes of the tiger, heads of the tiger have they; but the form of apes, and the spryness of apes. They thirst for human blood, they hunger for human flesh. In ferocity, no beast is their equal. . . . I see them marching in a dark passage wa in the bowels of the earth. They are heading for Atlo. They will break in upon us unawares—but where? I cannot see. All is dark, save where I see oros stormed by the monsters, and floors red with the gore of the slain. . . . I can see no more. No more, no more."

While speaking, her words were being transmitted to a papyrus sheet, which Metel at once handed to her mother—the trance images quickly fading in her memory, like a dream.

Reading the transcript, the seer hastened to have its story bell-signalled to Atlo's military chiefs—a mode of communicating rapidly to distant places through a series of signal towers each provided with a huge bell and an operator using a code of notes rung in varying lengths and in different keys, with each such note indicating a separate sound symbol.

"So you go to the front tomorrow, Loab;" Metel regretfully remarked to me that evening. "And I will be leaving to attend the wedding of my friend Lesba, at Nungo, to young Captain Kapso. Really, I would not dare to leave home at such a time, but that I had solemnly promised Lesba to serve as a bridesmaid. . . . I hope our troubles in Atlo will not begin before my return!"

"They hardly will," I retorted. "Yet our parting may be for a long while, for who knows how long the war may last! It may be many moons before we meet again. . . . And for this very reason, Metel, I wish you would tell me more concerning your Atlon attitude toward life—what in other lands is called religion. If I do not err, you once told me you did not believe in disembodied spirits. Am I right?"

"We believe body and spirit are inseparably

united in each human being. They together dissolve at the tomb, and reappear in the cradle. In the interval they form part of the insensate body or mass of life's substance. Into this they merge at death, and out of this they reappear in new births."

"Then your creed is without a hereafter?"

"Why a hereafter, when we have AN ETERNAL HERE in which each successive generation lives the hereafter of all previous ones, reaping the harvests, for good or ill, such as in the past they've sown?"

"Then Atlons can have little fear of death?" I queried.

"No more than they now have of ghosts," she replied. "And yet, the thought of death is repelled through blind impulse. For the great inertia of energies driving us on and denoting the degree of vitality in us is constantly resisting death and all thought of death. It is not so much reason, as impulse, that causes us to cling to life. . . . When age arrives, and the decline of our energies begins, the impulse of resistance to death also wanes, and often makes it welcome."

"So also do we resist sleep till exhausted energies cease their struggle against it."

"Sleep is Nature's building season," Metel explained. "When disturbed and exhausted forces

and tissues are ready to let the body of man collapse, Nature takes possession of it and attends to the needed repairs, giving us back the body when once more in good shape. . . . Beginning with the cradle, and ending with the grave, from sleep to sleep, we undergo a daily course of change, so that none can say at just what stage of growth the ME is truly likenessed in the body. Tell me, pray, which of all this myriad of bodies had the prior right to say 'this is me'? Are they not all me—all figures of a lifelong ME? Even so is mankind an ETERNAL ME, and its hereafter an ETERNAL HERE."

"Viewing life as an eternal here," said I, "you have an ever-present incentive to make your world a better one to live in. Your minds are not distracted by fancies of worlds beyond the grave, nor your efforts diverted to delusive tasks serving such worlds. . . . In other lands, and in none so much as in benighted Egypt, the earth is made gloomy with the shadows cast over it by the world beyond the grave. The very dreams of its princes are haunted by the spirits of this dread world, and the commands of these dream-born spirits dominate affairs and shape events, distorting both man and his development."

"Charlatans in every age have taken refuge in the affairs of the spirit world, that can neither be

proved nor disproved. Out of its voices, whether heard in dreams or framed by bald mendacity, creed upon creed have been evolved and priesthood upon priesthood, becoming bolder with their success and building up systems wielding vast power that seldom failed to become grasping and tyrannical."

"Since Atlons believe in no spirits," I now asked, "it cannot be your AT is a material god?"

"The traditional AT of Old Atlo was both a material and a personal divinity," she answered, "but the AT of our day is neither material nor personal. In the Sun we see merely a visible symbol of our creator—only a symbol. The real AT appears to us in the voice of conscience, and in all uplifting ideals that appeal to us. Through heeding these and seeking their fulfillment, we are constantly raised to higher being, and constantly joining hands with the creator in a portion of his work of creation. In all lower forms of life, upward-reaching aspirations form the pathway to growth, progress, development—creation. It is a blind worship of divinity that to the Atlon is a more conscious effort in the pursuit of lofty ideals—in following the lead of AT—AT, the ideal in all his varied forms—AT, the living god, reappearing ever in loftier ideals and broader concepts, as development proceeds."

"AT is then unlike other gods, being both immaterial and impersonal?"

"In one way, as the Ideal, he images the potential, the highest possible development of man individual and man collective. Rather, he is the image of what we may become, with proper effort, in due time; though not of what we now are. In another sense, we may consider him the soul of humanity and of the material universe. . . . But he is not a soul detached from its material base, no more than a material body considered without soul. He is in truth a reality—an entity we cannot deny nor detach from our lives."

"Your creed, as I see it," I confessed, "connects the ideal with the tangible, allowing neither to be separated. It rejects as erroneous all conceptions of material without spirit, as well as of all spirit without a material connection." [1]

[1] The striking disparity between the theology of Atlo, as here expounded by Metel and that in which the narrative is framed is difficult to account for except by assuming the chroniclers to have indulged in poetic license, framing the tale to suit the minds of Atlons for whom it was originally intended and whose traditional theology was probably still much in vogue. Viewed as an allegoric history, foreign invaders may have been given the form of beasts and good and bad idealized into gods of good and evil, and the reports of spies concealed in the prophetic visions of Mafra. . . But let who will solve the riddle. For us it is enough that the character of Mamnism is deftly exposed and in it we can see a duplicate of modern Com-

It is idle to repeat all we talked of that evening, so many things pertaining to the present and the past of the two worlds we represented; but over all hung the shadow of our parting that was to come that night, since I was to take a jubret for the war front in the early hours of the morning. So it was not strange that, as our later conversation proceeded, a note of tenderness became noticeable in our voices that was also reflected in our eyes, as we were drawn toward each other—the positive symptoms of love which each in our hearts felt and recognized.

Before the time of parting, I therefore gained courage to speak, stating my attitude toward her, in a halting tongue, but none the less, so that she could understand. I closed my broken utterance with asking her if she would trust her life at my side.

For answer she spake not a word, but drew her fair face close to mine and we kissed, pledging ourselves to one another. . . . The decision had come perhaps hastily; but lest it held in it an element of delusion, and was but a momentary impulse, we decided to keep the matter secret till we met again. And so it came about that no rings were exchanged, though each gave to the other a

mercialism, Profiteering Capitalism. For us it is enough that its message teaches how to perfect Capitalism.

miniature Atprint, which is a likeness they take here by a sort of magic, aided by the rays of our beaming Sun God AT. These Atprints were confined within lockets, to be worn around the neck.

It was a strange parting for us, with the gloom of Atlo's impending danger casting a deep shadow over our hearts.

## *PART II*

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## WORLDS APART—AS TOLD BY QUEEN METEL

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# CHAPTER I

## The Throne Awaiting Me

It was a bright Spring morning, about two hours after the departure of my betrothed, that I parted from my parents and entered my jubro, bound for the town of Nungo located in the southern part of Atlo. The town is quite a mining center in the midst of the Copper Mountain region. . . . I had a long journey before me, but thanks to the way our roadways are here constructed, sunk two cubits below the road level and four at crossings where they are also bridged for pedestrians, none of whom came in the path of its vehicles, we made such excellent time that I arrived before sunset.

Delightful rural scenes greeted the eye upon all sides, the verdure and foilage in their most brilliant hues much interspersed with the delicately tinted blossoms of the season. At almost regular intervals also rose towering oros, and also many tall windmills that pumped water from deep wells into great reservoirs from which the lands were moistened.

In these rural oros dwelt groups of husbandmen who co-operated in tilling the surrounding lands—each member in charge of some special branch of the work for which he was best fitted. In their fields they toiled, observing the moods of Nature; and in the orotos they turned over in their minds the observations made, thus giving their soil a double plowing. . . . These orotos brought them together so, their educational influence was wonderful, and they also obviated the baleful influences of solitude.

In each oro they had a priest and priestess of the hearth, who were also physicians teaching them the right care of their bodies and giving them also wise counsels as to their conduct to their fellow men, since it was their belief that as they did to their fellow men so did they to their gods, and so also did the gods judge men, listening to no vapid prayers. To these simple-minded Atlons the human body was the chosen temple of their god—the shrine he visited in the form of conscience and all uplifting ideals, calling men upward and onward.

The wedding ceremony was to be performed at noon of the following day. So, upon arrival at Silver Arrow oro, late in the day, its oro mother promptly took me to the guest chamber engaged for me by my friend Lesba, who happened to be

absent attending to some pre-nuptial matter. Here I at once made myself at home, had a refreshing bath, had my evening repast served in my room; and then, being fatigued with the long ride, I retired.

Waking early, I hastily dressed for a good walk, resolved to visit the famous Nungo Park, which faced the avenue on which Silver Arrow oro fronted. I could see, in the distance, the tall cloud-crested mount known as Torgo Peak, which had its base on the outskirts of the park.

There was not a soul on the avenue at this hour, and I skipped merrily on, with all the abandon of a school girl just freed from the confinement of the school room. It was an up hill climb all the way; for the land slopes down from the base of the mountain, reaching its lowest in the very heart of the town.

The air was inspiring, and the trees were filled with sweet warbling songsters, while the sod was everywhere beaded with glistening dews.

From within the park enclosure, I obtained a splendid view of Torgo Peak, whose massive proportions and gloomy frown quite overawed me.

From the midst of the park, rose a tall, thin column of smoke, mingling, high up, with the mass above Torgo Peak. This I recognized as emanating from a pit I had heard of, called The

Fiery Pit, supposed to be bottomless, and on rare occasions emitting flames.

Seated in view of this pit, and pondering over numerous matters, among which was the great danger confronting Atlo, my separation from my betrothed, and the approaching nuptials of my friend Lesba, I was suddenly startled by a pair of deft hands forcing a strip of cloth into my mouth and swiftly drawing it so taut I could give vent to no utterance. And immediately following this, a hood was thrown over my head, and I saw no more.

Like a flash, I realized I had been gagged and blindfolded. But wherefore? What could it possibly mean? Such treatment was the rarest of occurrences in Atlo; it was a thing really unaccountable. It was vain, thus handicapped, to struggle against my captors, who soon had me placed upon a litter, to be borne away.

Whither I was being borne, I had no idea, save that after a few steps on level ground I was dropped downward in the midst of a hot and smoky atmosphere. Almost stifled, I felt myself sinking lower and lower, till I could hear a heavy door creak on its hinges and open at the level I had reached. Then it seemed as if the litter was raised some and I was being borne along for quite a distance, when the litter seemed to be set down,

and in another moment the hood was lifted from my head and the gag removed from my mouth.

I now found myself in the midst of a deep gloom, and only after accustoming my eyes to my surroundings, did I discern a lengthy passageway —a sort of tunnel, as mysterious as it was gloomy.

Near me stood two stalwart men garbed in long, coarse robes reaching nearly to their feet. They seemed to be darker than our Atlons, and also distinctly featured, assuring me they belonged to some other race.

Presently they again placed the litter on their shoulders and bore me on through the dark passageway, till they came to what seemed to be a spacious chamber carved out of the rock—a sort of grotto. . . . Here they set me down; and one of them brought me a chair to sit on, taken from a niche in the grotto.

The other fellow had meanwhile procured a pot of paint, with which he proceeded to cover the grotto walls with great splotches that became luminous and served the part of lights.

Soon they had a fire blazing, and I saw they were preparing a meal. I could now realize that the grotto was a sort of storehouse and stopping place for those traveling through the tunnel.

While resting, I reflected upon the manifest harmlessness of my guards, who in no way be-

trayed the slightest rudeness—appearing rather solicitous for my comfort and security. But what was the meaning of my captivity? Surely I could not be held for the sake of a ransom?

At length, restless from speculating on the meaning of my captivity, I walked across the grotto to examine some queer figures I thought I had detected upon its walls. Coming near to them, I saw what were evidently strange messages, carved in hieroglyphics, over whose meaning I pondered in vain.

But following along the wall, what was my surprise upon observing a pair of eyes staring at me from the dark—the eyes of a beast of burden, a number of whom I soon after beheld stalled in a row further on, evidently kept there for a purpose. Upon closer scrutiny, I found they stood no more than three cubits high, and had long, straight and finely pointed horns upon their heads. They were undoubtedly a species of domesticated antelope—a creature entirely new to me.

Returning to my former station, I now found a table beside the chair; and besides being covered with a neat cloth, it had a number of golden platters laid upon it, heaped with steaming viands, which, being quite hungry, I partook of with no small relish.

I had hardly finished my repast, when my ears

were greeted with the sound of distant halloos from the direction whence I had been borne; and these my guards now answered in a similar manner.

Presently a group of men, perhaps a dozen or so, became distinguishable; and as they came nearer, I could see in their mien a spirit of dejection, as if depressed by some sore disappointment. These were also stalwart men, but not as dark as my guards, and of a different cast of countenance—albeit they were as much unlike Atlons as were the guards. They were garbed fantastically in short, belted tunics and tight-fitting pantaloons of soft leather, covered with checkered and striped designs and also serpentine figures. Each had a dagger in his belt and a wide-rimmed peaked hat upon his head. An air of great importance also distinguished them from the two men in whose charge I had been brought hither.

I kept my seat at the table, to which their leader now approached, swinging off his hat with an air of condescension, as he made a low bow.

I was unable at first to understand his words, though there was a strange familiarity in their sound. But after many gestures and much repetition of his words, I began to catch their meaning —being couched in an Aramaic more ancient than that from which our Atlon had been derived.

. . . Once realizing this fact, and accustoming my ears to his peculiar intonations, the understanding of his words became easier; and after he had undergone a similar experience in endeavoring to interpret my answers, our ability to converse with one another by degrees developed.

From his lips, I soon divined the object of the expedition of this band by whom I had been abducted. They had come from an underground world far, very far away, in a land called Omshola, aiming to abduct from the upper world an Atlon male, whom they designed to set upon the throne as their ruler. From time immemorial, it had been their custom to secure rulers in this manner—men supposed to be superior beings—the world above being regarded as a realm of spirits. The Kingdom of Omshola was at the present time in the hands of a regent, awaiting a successor to the throne; and none was now available, since the expedition had met with failure, owing to the arrival, in the territory surrounding the town of Nungo, of myriads of monstrous beasts, who were ravaging the district and had driven its people into seclusion.

My own capture had been made necessary, to prevent my giving an alarm that might have been fatal to the expedition, or else betraying their secret door to Atlo.

So I learned how my mother's prophetic vision had come true, and the beasts had succeeded in effecting an entrance into Atlo. I shuddered at the thought of what this news signified. What would become of Atlo; and how, also, could I ever return? I was now practically an exile, and an alien in a strange world. Would I ever be able to return? Would I ever again meet my parents, or ever again see my betrothed? I was indeed alone. But I resolved not to give way to despondency. Had not my betrothed, Loab, also been left alone in a strange world; and did not he of his own free will remain, when he might have returned to rejoin family and fortune and native land? I would take heart from his noble example.

Kosoki Samba, the leader of the expedition and the crown counselor of Omshola, was in despair. He saw a gloomy outlook facing his country, left without a ruler—its ambitious nobles all at loggerheads in their selfish desire to attain the crown—a sure herald of approaching anarchy. In his intense agitation over the dangerous position of Omshola, he nervously paced the floor of the grotto, ran his long fingers through his raven locks, and then suddenly came to a pause.

"I have it! I have it at last!" he joyfully exclaimed, a new light beaming in his eyes. "Why

not? If no king, why not a queen?" His last words sank into a whisper and remained inaudible.

Then, passing to the table at which I was seated, he stopped, as if to peer into my very soul. I faced him calmly, smiling even; for I had divined his object.

Again he began pacing the grotto length, back and forth, deeply absorbed in the problem before him. Finally he seemed resolved upon the course to pursue; and presenting himself with a low obeisance, he addressed me:

"Your ladyship: as you are already aware, the throne of Omshola is vacant and needs an occupant—needs one sorely, if the land is to escape a reign of anarchy. It is now impossible to fill the vacancy with a king, as has ever been the custom; but after serious contemplation, I have come to the conclusion that if we can have no king to occupy the throne, there is no reason why we cannot have a queen. There is nothing in the way, I assure you, but your own decision to save our realm by filling the exalted post. . . . I ask not that you reply without giving the matter due deliberation. It is a very serious step, which I beg that you will carefully consider. In doing so, I shall endeavor to be of aid to you, as far as is possible—particularly in informing you concerning the realm and its affairs."

As practically the only course for me to pursue, I naturally agreed to take into consideration the assumption of queenship. Think of it—a crown begging me for acceptance! Was it not more like a dream than possible reality? And yet I knew it was reality, though stranger than anything told in fairy tales!

Of course I had many long conversations with the crown counselor, a fine looking specimen of his people, dressed less showily than his companions, but better caparisoned inwardly—if his keen eyes and sensitive facial expression stood for aught.

From him I gleaned what information concerning the land was necessary; and after discussing with him all phases of the subject, I reached the inevitable conclusion that both for my own safety and that of the land of Omshola, I had no other course open than to accept the throne, together with the obligations inseparable, in my mind, from the possession of power, great or little.

It was the second day of our sojourn in the grotto, when I made my decision known to Kosoki Samba; and now we prepared for a long journey to Omshola, which would take us a whole month, riding upon the backs of the swift footed tofos—the long-horned beasts I had seen in the grotto.

It was a tedious journey, owing to its great length; and we daily stopped at grottos that were distributed on the route so thickly that we had to pass one every other hour. The grottos were each equipped with supplies and provisions kept stored in them for the benefit of travelers.

I was very much interested in them, and in the strange hieroglyphics carved on their sides. So I enquired of Kosoki Samba as to their origin, as well as of the lengthy passage connecting them with each other. The hewing of all these out of the hard flinty rock must have been a prodigious work. Had it been done by the Omsholans?

To my query the crown counselor replied, saying that no one knew by whom the vast undertaking had been accomplished. It had not been done by the Omsholans, or by any people within their knowledge. The passage and the grottos had been there as long as tradition's earliest recollections and hints; and who had performed the superhuman task, or carved the inscriptions, would remain a mystery, perhaps to the end of time.

Arriving at the last grotto before reaching Omsh, the capital city and gateway to Omshola, we halted—there to remain, while the crown counselor and a part of his retinue hastened in advance to make the necessary arrangements for the great event, while also dispatching a suite of at-

tendants to the grotto equipped with all the necessaries for conveying me in a closed carriage to the royal palace at Omsh.

And as I waited here, I dreamed, with many a sigh, of what might at this very time be happening in Atlo, and of the amazing possibilities opening up to me in the new world I was to enter.

## CHAPTER II

### On Atlo's Fighting Front

Enrolled as a member of Atlo's army of defense, Loab Ben Phra was immediately dispatched to the border town of Gegra, near Long Neck isthmus, where he was assigned a post on one of its armored war jubros which was hurried forward, to take its place in the great line stationed across the Neck to debar the entrance of the invading beast horde.

The goro goros, named thus after the guttural sound they thundered like a battle cry when advancing upon their foe, were colossal apes, black as pitch, whose stature was rarely less than five or six cubits and whose shoulder breadth was proportional, with arms hanging to the ground framed in muscles of iron. Their heads had the shape and expression of the tiger, whose ferocity they more than equalled. In spite of their short legs, they were as fleet as an antelope, and were capable of taking mighty leaps, and climbing like cats. . . . More than all this, they could hurl stones, or other missiles, as if thrown from a cata-

pult; and they wielded huge clubs, far-reaching, falling with crushing force wherever they descended. In low cunning they rivalled the fox; and they communicated to each other in a jargon such thoughts as their minds were capable of. They were neither man nor ordinary ape. If I were to class them, I should hold them as super-apes—a name by which they were not infrequently designated.

Opposed to these formidable beasts, Atlo had rigged up a squadron comprising hundreds upon hundreds of armored jubros fitted to travel over the roughest ground, fronted with an elognated snout—a V shaped projection with sharp edges that helped to cut its way through brush or jungle, or through the massed ranks of the invading beasts. These jubros were completely covered with iron plates, all perforated, so as to enable the men within to fire, by means of blow guns, tiny arrows or shafts tipped in a liquid poison paste.

Behind their iron ramparts, the jubro warriors were obliged to keep perfectly cool, using the utmost care in dipping their tiny shafts in the liquid poison paste, lest they themselves be bruised and made its victims. Nor was this an easy matter, with the sides of the jubro ever clattering and thundering from the mighty blows of missiles hurled against them.

There were special jubros also constructed to make dashes into the ranks of the foe; and these had, in addition to the long sharp snout, horizontal knives projecting, designed to mow down the foe as with mammoth scythes.

Into one of these dash jubros Loab was soon transferred, carrying with him his Sidon sword and a huge quiver filled with the little death shafts to be fired through his blow gun.

Across the entire breadth of Long Neck, a distance one could scarcely travel afoot from the rising to the setting of the sun, stretched our line of defense jubros, less than twenty paces apart, and with a line of dash jubros behind, ready to mow down such of the beasts as managed to penetrate the first line.

Here and there, wherever a deep ravine intervened, strong walls of stone had been erected to bar the foe's advance; and in a ditch dug upon each wall was kept a body of Atlene ready to be ignited the moment the brutes succeeded in clambering to the top. An extinguishing device was also in readiness for quenching the flame when its work was done, and thereby sparing the Atlene for resisting repeated attempts.

Already scouts were reporting the approach of the superapes, reaching the Neck in squads from

all directions, and rapidly concentrating into a mighty host. But although the squads had each its quasi leader, this limited leadership counted for little when massed together in the unorganized horde. It made an unwieldy mass of blind brute force, moving on instinctively by its latent thirst for human gore and its hunger for human flesh, with which the demon goddess Mammon had imbued them.

The vast horde was in reality a greater beast, without a head—a roaring ocean of madness, let loose to destroy whatever interposed. In short, it was a horde and not an army. This horde was also much the smaller portion of the goro goros moving toward Atlo, the larger portion of them having been diverted into an underground passage some of their leaders had accidentally discovered and followed, when nearing Long Neck. The passage, as it happened, led to an opening in the Copper Mountain region, in Atlo; and into this region the greater body of the goro goros now poured, working terrible havoc upon all sides, of which I shall have more to tell in its due place.

Of this diversion, King Mozo had not yet learned; but as soon as the report reached him by bell-signal dispatches, he at once saw the necessity to readapt his plans, so as to deal with the new situation confronting him.

He could not afford to divide his forces, and fight both hordes simultaneously. But in order to be of help in the interior of Atlo, he must adopt more aggressive tactics against the goro goros now approaching along the isthmus. He must crush and destroy these, so as to be able, afterwards, to pursue the remaining superapes with a sufficient force to be effective.

The dash jubros were now placed in the forefront, with their rear covered by the guard jubros that were to slay all the beasts that were left behind in the dashes contemplated. A large body of guard jubros were also stationed so as to preclude entrance from the sides of ravines.

Orders had already been signalled to all the officers stationed along the jubro lines, so as to act in concert. Dusk had begun to cast its haze over the scene; and as the darkness gradually deepened, artificial lights, generated by the jubros, began to flash in blinding rays, so intense as to infuse the beasts with a superstitious dread, holding them for the while in check.

Silently the jubros thus glared at the foe without sound or movement, giving our forces a chance to snatch a few brief hours of slumber, and accustoming the beasts to the seeming harmlessness of these mysterious creatures.

After some time, the goro goros huddled them-

TROOB
SIMDO
MUTRO
LAKE ATLENE
ATLIO
ATLIC CANAL
COPPER MOUNTAINS
ATLO
VELA
PUSTO
TORGO PEAK
NUNGO
GORO GORO TUNNEL
OMSHOLA TUNNEL
GEGRA
LONG NECK
SEA OF ATLANTICA
CONTINENT OF ATLANTIS
BROMS EXIT
OMSHOLA
OMSCH
GUNTHR
FOLFINS
ATLORA
DESERT OF MOROC
SHORT NECK
ATLORABA

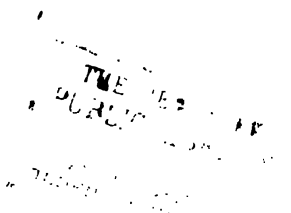
selves up in curled lumps, or stretched their bodies on the ground—their combined snoring filling the night with a weird and uncanny sound.

But when midnight came, a series of trumpet blasts rang across the isthmus; and, with one accord, thousands of dash jubros gave vent to sudden shrieks, as they dashed onward and into the ranks of the newly awakened and much befuddled foe. Through their ranks, and back again, the iron monsters whirred, mowing them down in hundreds with each sweep. Bewildered, the beasts rushed about, many aimlessly, only to be stricken with the envenomed darts or else to rush into the very path of some advancing jubro and be laid low. . . But the fight was not all one-sided, for there were not a few of the beasts whose presence of mind prompted them to hurl large stones against the jubro sides, denting and often tearing apart strips of plate through which later missiles found entrance and wrought sore havoc. Now and then some wily fiend would dart from behind a jubro and leap upon it, with his massive club battering in its roof, and then engaging in a deadly conflict with its inmates.

Swift of foot as were the beasts, there was no escape from the swifter iron monsters that kept on decimating their ranks.

One gigantic superape had succeeded in mount-

"Loab was the first to get out; but only to be confronted by the giant beast, with its huge club upraised to dash *out his brains.*"



ing the jubro in which Loab Ben Phara was serving; and battering in the top at its very forefront, it struck the driver dead with its first blow, and then effected an entrance, club in hand, ready to break more heads. But in the midst of this confusion, while the Atlons were pressing to the rear to get out of its long reach, the driverless vehicle dashed into a huge rock by the wayside, and was upset.

Most of the inmates were disabled by the shock of the collision; but the beast extricated itself, without having let go of its terrible weapon. Of the rest, Loab was the first to get out; but only to be confronted by the giant beast, with its huge club upraised to dash out his brains.

But not in vain had Loab received instructions in swordsmanship from the greatest master in Athens. With lightning speed, he sprang from under the sweep of the mighty bludgeon. Coping with a beast so colossal, he well knew flight was vain. It was a struggle in which he had either to slay or be slain. His sword was fortunately still in its scabbard; and drawing it forth, he held it upraised and stood motionless as a statue, keenly watching his dire antagonist, and ready to adapt his action to whatever threatened. With a mad roar the goro goro made another onrush; but this time, not only was the bludgeon evaded, but with

a lightning forward rush, the Atlon had his enemy disemboweled; and before the beast could recover self-possession, gave it another thrust, and left it in its death agonies.

The struggle had been a terrible strain upon the nerves of Loab Ben Phra; and now that the immediate danger was over, he was ready to collapse. For a moment he stood with every muscle quivering, and his mind in a daze. He gazed confusedly upon the field, and then suddenly recalled the disaster that had befallen his jubro. There it still lay, but not a soul was within, or in sight. The field of conflict had shifted a long way to the right, where a tightening cordon was holding confined the remaining brutes, pending their gradual annihilation.

Hastening to rejoin his comrades in the jubro cordon, he had just managed to draw a driver's attention, when towering over him he suddenly faced the tiger eyes of another of the gigantic beasts. He had not a moment to lose; and quick as a flash, he threw himself down at the very feet of the monster, and serpent-like wriggled through the grass. Then, rising suddenly, before the brute had time to sense his whereabouts, he plunged his sharp blade deep into the side of the great super-ape. . . There was no time to extricate the

weapon; so he left it there, while dashing swiftly beyond reach of the dying beast.

In another moment, the jubro he had signalled was at his side. The battle with the brutes was practically over by this time, very few of the super-apes being left within the cordon for final extermination. The men within now stepped out, and all stopped to inspect the dead monster who lay stretched out, a great ferocity still marking his features. Loab now recovered his sword, and received the highest encomiums for the prowess he had displayed.

He now learned that while he was battling with the first goro goro, two jubros had arrived to rescue the men pinned down in the overturned vehicle, several of whom had been quite seriously maimed.

With the goro goros on this front annihilated, King Mozo was now free to concentrate his forces and his mind upon the larger hordes that had succeeded in effecting an entrance into Atlo. Foreseeing a protracted war before him, he now resolved on making ample preparation. The cordon across Long Neck was to be lengthened as fast as the construction of more war jubros permitted; and it was to keep on stretching and strengthening

its line, ever moving eastward and confining the foe within smaller territory, while recovering control of a wider and wider area in the west for cultivation of the soil and insuring the future food supply of the nation.

## CHAPTER III

### Under Siege In Their Oros

Great was the consternation felt throughout all 'Atlo when news of the interior invasion came ringing by bell-signal alphabet from station to station to every corner of the land. In the home of my parents, knowing I was at the time in the very heart of the infested region, it was doubly alarming.

To Nungo they therefore at once dispatched, enquiring as to my safety. But owing to the great number of similar calls upon Nungo, it was several days before word came to them; and that not very assuring, at best. Nothing had been seen of me since the day of my arrival at Flying Arrow oro; but it was thought I had left it to pay a short visit to a friend there, in another oro, with which they were as yet unable to communicate. So the suspense and anxiety of my parents were only prolonged.

A whole week had passed, and no definite information had been forthcoming. To all appearances, I had mysteriously disappeared, and not

the slightest trace of me had been discovered—not as much as a shred of my garments, or even a button.

Had I become a victim of the beasts, some trace of my garments would surely have been left; but in the confused state of affairs it was not to be inferred that failure to find such traces implied escape from such a fate. True, a mystery hung around my disappearance; but it was not enough to assure my parents who, in their heart of hearts, were already mourning me as one who would nevermore return.

In the meantime, the news reported in every Atlon oro reeked with tales of atrocities too horrible to depict; and dark terror lurked behind the resolute attitude taken by its people. The making of strong steel bars for doors and windows was pushed to the extreme in every separate iron works, and the supply was daily being forwarded in armored jubros to the oros—especially those of the region surrounding Nungo.

Taken completely by surprise, the town of Nungo—unprepared—became the first center of assault by the ferocious brutes. Here the flying missiles, mainly rocks and bricks, battered their way through many a door and window, permitting the monsters to force an entrance and engage the

inmates in deadly conflict. The inmates were not equipped with blowguns and poison darts, and had to rely on the use of spears and swords, which, in close conflict, were of small avail—the beasts snapping spears into splinters and swords into broken fragments. But neither could the beasts in the crowded rooms use their clubs effectually. What told most against them were crackshot bowmen, who, at close range, pierced many a superape heart with their long arrows.

Among the first steps taken, when the missiles hurled against the oros began to clatter against doors and shatter windows, was the hurrying of all women and children down into the lowest subbasements, whose approach was kept safely barred against intrusion. Safely ensconced in these retreats, many of the women seized spades and began to dig tunnels, designed to penetrate from oro to oro as a means for uniting the forces and resources of the town.

There had been hardly an oro into which more or less of the beasts had not effected an entrance, and in which numbers of human lives had not been lost in the fierce combats that ensued. . . . Fortunately, upon the third day of the siege, a train of armored jubros arrived laden with a supply of blow guns and shafts, and the poison paste in which to tip them. With this additional equip-

ment, it was not long before they had the superapes within the oros slain, and were able to repel further intrusion.

But Nungo was far from the only town to suffer by the ravages of the infuriated monsters. Hundreds of other towns, and countless isolated oros, occupied by co-operative husbandmen, suffered similar losses. In a few oros not a male Atlon survived, and the victims had been ravenously devoured.

As the fighting progressed in the towns and cities, and the Atlons began to gain a better control of the defence, the beasts were daily suffering greater hunger; and after having devoured such domestic animals as came within their reach, and consumed what vegetation offered the smallest particle of nourishment, even to chewing up the leaves and bark of plants and trees, they finally began to scatter into the rural regions for subsistence. There they would relieve their desperate hunger; but only soon again to return. Thus while never entirely deserting the towns, they were never again there in full force.

In many towns, the rancor felt against the superapes was bitter, and plans for destroying the foe with flames of Atlene were freely discussed, but were promptly discountenanced by King

Mozo, upon learning of them. The beasts, he assured them, could be annihilated without recourse to this barbarous mode of warfare. To resort to it would be to needlessly brutalize themselves. And besides, it would be accompanied with dangers of conflagration, and the still greater danger of teaching the cunning beasts the use of fire, to the undoing of Atlo.

All this while King Mozo was steadily adding to the length of the cordon separating east from west—reducing the area of territory under siege, and enlarging that subject to cultivation. Whenever he learned of the beasts being concentrated anywhere in menacing numbers, he would expedite a train of jubros to decimate and scatter them, thus relieving the extreme tension suffered by the residents of the locality.

As an auxiliary movement, King Mozo also ordered the tunneling of paths from oro to oro, and also to the factories, in every town and city, uniting all the productive resources and all the supplies so that they could readily at any time be transferred where safest or most needed. . . . With the avenues and streets impassable for the Atlons, they, in this manner, were to do all the transporting and intercommunication by tunnel, and thus to prevent industry from coming to a

complete standstill. Through this foresight, life in Atlo gradually began again to assume a semblance of its former state—its industrial and social activities in progress in spite of the siege. Only the rural oros still remained isolated.

The beasts were still too preponderant in numbers for daring an aggressive campaign against them. Years would have to elapse before they could be sufficiently decimated, or reduced by hunger, to undertake a final dash to complete their annihilation.

Long already had the people of Atlo become accustomed to the thunderous howling of the beasts, who seemed to exult in the dread noises their combined uproar produced. All day long and far into the night went up the interminable repetition of their dread cries of "goro goro," from which that name had been given them, but to which Atlons had become accustomed. Silence would, in fact, have sounded stranger now to Atlon ears, than did all their ear-splitting hubbub.

During all these stirring times, my betrothed had been unable to ascertain more concerning my fate than contained in the columns of the news sheets passing from hand to hand—information positive enough as to my total disappearance, but lacking in any definite facts. The transmission of messages was at the time difficult, and communica-

tion both irregular and unreliable. Only a single note reached him from my parents, and that left him as much in the dark as before. Some hope, however, lingered in his breast—the vague thought that I might be ill, in some isolated oro, unable to effect any communication with the authorities.

Despair might perhaps have oppressed him, but for the manifold duties that kept his mind absorbed, and thus lightened his burden.

## CHAPTER IV

### MADE QUEEN OF OMSHOLA

TRUE to Kosoki Samba's promise, a party of Omsholans in due time arrived from the city to bear me in a closed carriage, screened from the eyes of curious spectators, within the precincts of the royal palace.

Ensconced within its spacious chambers, skillful attendants at once took me in charge to make that outward transformation by which I was to look, as well as be a queen. After being bathed in scented waters and rubbed down with perfumed ointments, I was handled like a precious doll, upon which one garb after the next was placed, and each carefully regarded before final acceptance. . . . When I finally came out of their hands, I declare I was so elaborately decked out, I could scarcely recognize myself. I was in fact almost completely lost in the blaze of jewels and decorations with which I was covered. What more, with fine laces, stiff ruffles and rustling silks, it became a question in my mind whether I would ever be able to act up the part these garments and fittings made of me.

With one attendant bearing my long train, another holding over my head a bejewelled parasol, and still another at my side with a huge whizzing fan of many colors, I could not march across the room but as the central figure in a parade. I must have been a spectacle for the gods.

I had barely time to have a good rest, before Kosoki Samba appeared, accompanied with the regent Kone Sobrati, whom he officially presented, and who thereupon offered his arm to lean upon while being taken by him to the great throne room where the chief nobles of the land were already assembled, awaiting me.

Borne upon his arm, and followed by a bevy of attendants, we now marched in stately pomp into the assembly room, in which were already gathered a vast concourse of nobles, all bejewelled, befrilled and befeathered in their finest.

Upon my entrance, all bowed to the marble floor, beating their faces against it, in token of their submission to the person destined to occupy the throne.

The regent now led me to the throne, and, with a significant gesture, bade me be seated; which I did, holding my head erect, while two Kones brought the dazzling crown and placed it upon my brow, and a third Kone placed in my

hand the royal scepter—all raising the cry, "Hail, hail the Queen!"

Equipped with these tokens of royalty, and thus announced, the nobles rose to their feet, shouting in unison "Melka Ungri; Erugo Tum," meaning "Rule the Queen; Her Word is Law." This cry they thrice repeated with a hearty vigor; signifying their acquiescence to my future mandates, be they what they would.

I was from this hour their absolute monarch; and all these sub-rulers were my subject vassals.

Before dismissing them, I made a brief address, in which I thanked them cordially for the high trust placed in me, in conferring upon me the Crown of Omshola. "You have acknowledged my word to be the law of the land; and so let it be; for I shall look for the light governing it, in the fountains of truth and justice. In the use of my authority and power, I shall endeavor to keep in mind the obligations attending all authority and all power."

I was now mistress of a vast empire, endowed with powers unlimited; and as I retired into my private quarters, I seemed to feel the weight of a mighty responsibility resting upon me. Yet was I also buoyed up with the realization that there was honor in the burden; and I felt a new

joy in the thought of the mighty influence I might wield for the advancement of the people of this land.

For a few weeks I allowed Kosoki Samba, in whom I felt the utmost confidence, and who to the very end was ever faithful to the trust I placed in him, to represent me in conducting the affairs of the realm. In the meantime, I busied myself with learning as much as possible concerning Omshola and its people.

Among the large body of entertainers with whom my court was then filled, was one who aroused my interest—a dwarf minstrel, Borok, whose weird tales, comical manners and ready wit were astonishing. He could sing and also play the harp with admirable skill, so that we often joined in the singing of duets.

But what I most prized in the fellow was a sort of genius of insight he seemed to possess, by which he could judge Omsholan affairs so well, one would have thought he had a perfect knowledge of Atlism.

From this dwarf, I soon learned how Omshola was governed. While a monarchy, it was to no small extent under the sway of a hierarchical priesthood, the Kones, and also a hereditary aristocracy, the Koms—both Koms and Kones, and their offspring, being known as the Komyim.

The Komyim were all either Koms, first sons of Koms; or else, if not Kones, occupying posts of honor within the gift of the Crown. They were either Kosokis, who are Crown Counselors, or else Kosokoms, who are Warrior Chiefs. They were all members of the nobles or Komyim.

About half of the land in the realm was in the hands of the Koms, and was worked by slaves. Of the remainder, the Crown held a half, also worked by slaves; and the income derived from them was what supported the Crown. It drew no revenue from either the Koms or the Kones. . . . The remaining quarter of the lands was held by the Kones and was worked by what were designated as free slaves—renters of the lands, the buildings on them and all the varied equipments, for the use of which the Kones exacted from them such rents as kept them in as hard a grind as any of the slaves.

While the Koms lived as droning dandies, the Kones devoted themselves to the spiritual welfare of both nobles and slaves. They were known as Lords of the Spirit World; the Koms as Lords of the Earth. The Spirit World was the realm lying above the crystal roof of Omshola, the mysterious region whence were heard the thunders of the Spirit Lord and were seen his forked anger flashing against Omshola's brilliant roof—anger

that often had melted great holes and rents in the crystal barrier between the two worlds.

To the benighted people of this realm, including the Kones, the Spirits were held in superstitious dread; and hence the awe and fear with which they viewed their rulers, who had come to them from the Spirit World.

In each city and town were also many free slaves who labored as artisans in shops and small factories belonging to the Kones, and who had high rents to pay for their use—that of the shops, the land they stood on and the equipments they contained. With all their freedom, they fared little, if any, better than other artisan slaves.

In the heart of each settlement was a district surrounded with high walls, joining a series of temples devoted to the worship of Spirits and presided over by Kones. These sections were known as komyimsas; and within them resided only members of the Komyim. Most of the Koms resided in komyimsas, rarely remaining on their Kom lands, which they trusted entirely in the hands of their respective stewards, satisfied with receiving regularly from them a customary stipend representing the net produce of their lands. They were all proud dandies, as vain as peacocks, and despising all worldly cares apart from those involved in the sports they indulged in.

In each settlement there was also a market house, to which plantation stewards and town artisans brought their surplus productions for exchange, each aiming to obtain for his surplus a supply of articles more suitable to his needs. . . . While no money was yet in use, they carried about them a store of kibos, buttons of gold strung upon cords from which they could readily be removed for transfer.

The kibos were used as a convenience in making good discrepancies in what were otherwise unequal exchanges—being thus a sort of equalizing medium. Apart from the labor involved in their making, they had not a particle of value, since the sands of Omshola were shiny with granules of gold and the very earth in this land was literally ribbed with solid masses of the ore. The more valuable kibos had engravings on their faces, some of which were miniature portraits.

From my first glimpse of this strange land, I obtained but a faint impression, my mind being absorbed in the clamorous attentions given me by the vast throng of my people, for the first time beholding my person in my inaugural procession. The assembled multitude kept the air filled with their joyful greetings, and the shrill music of cymbals and strange instruments I had never be-

fore listened to. It was, of course, a pompous parade, in which I figured as a deity—a superior being, condescending to serve as their ruler. I could at times hardly suppress my disposition to laugh outright at their manner of adoration, and the frequency in which they threw themselves down on their faces and beat the earth with their brows.

But from later tours through the city and its surroundings—made incognito, though attended with a guard of officials kept in disguise—I was astonished at the quaint splendor of this world, stranger even than Atlo must have seemed to my betrothed. Here was an underground world, whose roof was one vast sheet of crystal, in many colors and hues, through which the sunlight from the upper realm came down mellowed or radiant, according to the thickness of the portion of the roof it penetrated.

Thus over the heads of these people was ever spread a vast canopy of jasper and emerald and ruby, of sapphire and of topaz, while its vegetation and foliage were as if their original brilliance had faded.

In my eyes the whole land seemed immersed in a dreamy twilight—a weird world whose palaces and temples were walls of cemented gems, each single one of which might have bought an

empire in the world beyond the shores of Atlantis. Even the mud hovels of the slaves and the poor freedmen, sparkled with the glimmer of gold with which the mud was filled. From crevices closed by transparent gems, they drew light, and from golden bowls they drank.

At its north and south, the land extended to the open sea of Atlantica, allowing breezes to freshen the atmosphere of the land; and their service was the more effectual for the numerous gaps in the roof of the land, and the porous rock at its eastern and western extremes.

At its southern extremity, Omshola was cut off from the sea by a vast desert occupied by the Folfins, whose savage tribes barred access to it; and on the northern extremity it stood more than a hundred cubits above the sea level, from which staggering height it was effectually separated from the outer world.

So here Omshola lay, a vast hollowed tortoise shell, crossing the continent of Atlantis, with open ends—a land of gold and gems, of small value here, but the like of which the outer world did not so much as dream.

I asked Borok what he knew of the condition and fare of the slaves, impressing him with the fact that I wished nothing glossed over to please me. The naked truth was what I desired of him.

"There are large numbers of them," he thoughtfully replied, "who are perfectly contented with their lot, who lack imagination or spirit. These would jog on all their lives on the pittance to which they have been accustomed, and content to accept their lot in the face of the luxurious ease indulged in by their masters, of which they fortunately see very little, since their masters spend most of their time in their komyimsas or else in the Royal Palace. . . . But to the few imbued with spirit and intelligence, their lives are a harrowing torture. If they could be detached in some way from the rest and given a chance to buy their freedom, they would toil with redoubled zeal to accomplish their redemption."

The difficulty, in this manner, to open for them a way to liberty I could see lay in distinguishing them from the rest; since, as soon as such a plan was inaugurated, there would be few left who would not wish to embrace the opportunity. It might as well be all as only a trifling few; only that to free them all would not win the consent of their masters. They might possibly even object to giving the opportunity to a few. Upon the Crown lands, something might possibly be done for its slaves; but just what, I was not at the time prepared to say.

From Magya, the court historian, a shriveled

gray beard, with bent figure and pointed, dark features, I learned that the Omsholans had long ceased to be a warlike people, and that for centuries their accessions of slaves had been made by the surrender of Folfins in time of dearth—whole families of them in this manner evading starvation by freely entering into bondage. The first slaves had, of course, been the fruit of conquest.

In their temples, the Kones presided, often addressing the worshippers assembled from elevated posts stationed for this purpose. But what was most impressive, were the mammoth figures carved in stone, whose lips moved and whose eyes flashed, when admonishing evil doers. They were all deified Kones, of previous generations. That the voices heard were merely the ventriloquism of Kones cunningly concealed did not affect the simple faith of the Kones, who believed themselves qualified representatives of the spirits in the realm above and dictators of the standards by which men were to conduct themselves. But alas, how often they humanly mistook thoughts prompted by their individual interests for the voice of the spirits. In other worlds, men allowed the same trick to delude them in their interpretations of standards of human conduct—a grievous error, to which both priest and layman were equally liable. . . Often they decreed, in some way, the infallibilty of their

standards; but this was only done in cases where the standards could not abide criticism and stand, as it were, on their own legs.

One of these infallibility decrees had it that a Melk or King could do no wrong. Possessed of absolute power, how could he commit a wrong? It was a handy decree; for by virtue of it, the Komyims also were incapable of doing any wrong to those beneath them. Oh, the world was to these children a sweet pudding, that made itself for them and never grew smaller. What a fairy tale was their life! And well for them also was their childlike innocence, incapable of realizing what suffering was endured to keep up the glamor of their world.

From Borok I also learned that the moral standards imposed by the Kones related only to conduct *within* each class. It was all meaningless from a member of one class to one of another class. So it was made easy for Komyim to be affable and polite to one another; to dress well for each other's sake; to garb their very thoughts also in fine dress, and their manners as well; displaying in all these matters a superior culture. They piqued themselves on this superiority, and always managed to use special words and garments and ways requiring means and leisure, thereby placing them out of the reach of the "vul-

gar." They also did this in learning, where the most absurd titles and dignities were distributed, so as to give value to all they said, and to disparage what came from the "vulgar" many.

Yet with all the pomp of their artificial dignities and distinctions, the bulk of wisdom had to come from the "vulgar" masses, and also the truest character—though by the deft manipulations of the idle lords much of the credit was diverted from those to whom it was due, and absorbed by the rulers. For did not the world belong to them; and even what emanated from the poor man's brain, did not that also belong to them? They stole naught, and could not steal; since all belonged to them. That, in promulgating such a doctrine, they made themselves thieves, they saw not.

## CHAPTER V

### The Dawn of Liberty

Months had already passed since my entrance into this new world, with which I was gradually familiarizing myself. Already was my past as if hidden in a mist—a vague image that was fading more and more. It is true that in idle moments, of which I had but few, my mind would often dwell on my sudden parting from all who were dear to me; but since all speculation in that direction was vain, I resolved to forget, and throw all my energies into the needs of Omshola.

My palace was a vast structure, spread over a large area, and holding, besides my private quarters and the great throne room or audience chamber, a large number of halls and chambers in which open house was at all hours kept for visiting members of the Komyim; there were also the quarters occupied by the harem left by my predecessor, with its numerous women and children, and the slaves attending them. Then there were also the quarters occupied by the corps of entertainers, the jugglers, dancers, story tellers, minstrels, acro-

bats and mimics, who busied themselves entertaining either the Komyim or the harem, when not wanted to amuse me.

You may imagine, from this, what a costly establishment was the Royal Palace—an extravagance adding no little to the burden imposed on the Crown land slaves for its maintenance. Desiring to reduce this wanton extravagance, I consulted my chamberlain, to learn from him how odious a task it would be. It was impossible to discard these useless supernumeraries without occasioning much bitterness of feeling and dangerous discontent.

As an instance of the light-headed extravagance of the Komyim, one of their number, one day while I was giving an audience, fell upon his knees and prayed for a hearing.

Granting his plea, I learned that my Crown Officers were about to seize his lands for a delinquent personal debt.

"How come you," I asked, "to be remiss?"

"Through a crop shortage, Gracious Melka," he hesitatingly replied.

"A crop shortage, true enough, my good fellow;" I retorted, "but a mere shortage in your crop of gambling profits, was it not? Were you not yesterday gaming heavily in the Palace?"

"The Spirits crossed my play, Noble Melka, so that I lost—lost the very kibos left by my steward for payment of the debt, just when I looked to double their sum!"

"So you gambled with your creditor's kibos, wretched man, and you lost them. You played your property on the gambling table, and now you ask that you may retain it, after its loss—knowing well what you staked. A poor gambler, you!"

Under the frown of my disapproval, the poor fellow began to grovel at my feet, weeping and groaning.

"Rise, my young fellow," I commanded, "and cease your weeping. The law claims your property; and were it a perfectly just law, I should let it take its course. But it will have all it is entitled to, if the debt is repaid in full and with a small addition to cover the extra delay you have occasioned. See you, therefore, that within one year, the creditor is satisfied; and meanwhile consider yourself banished from the Palace for that year, or until the debt is paid."

As was this youth, so were all the Komyim—mere sucklings on the social breast.

In my inmost thoughts, I had determined that Omshola should some day be released from the life-sapping draft of these sucklings. I would lib-

erate the slaves on my Crown lands, thereby setting an example for the Komyim.

At a gathering of Komyim, invited soon after to my audience chamber, I announced to them a decree liberating all the Crown land slaves. It was a startling announcement; and I therefore closely scrutinized the faces of my auditors, to note the impression made on their minds by the announcement.

"In emancipating my slaves," I informed them, "I stand entirely within my rights to do with my slaves as pleases me, even as you all do. I have decided the Crown shall no longer occupy a second place in liberality to its dependents. What the Kones have for generations done, the Crown shall now also undertake; for it is my intention to spur my newly made free slaves to greater effort and productive efficiency than they have ever hitherto displayed. If they prosper more, the Crown will not suffer by it; and if they are made the happier by it, so much the happier will I be."

"As a great branch of the ruling class," I resumed, "it would please me to listen to your views, O members of the Komyim, before I make public the decree. On the morrow, at this hour, I will therefore look for your presence, and listen to what you have to say."

From the time of their dismissal, this decree of

their Melka became their constant topic of discussion. To the Koms its outcome appeared to be problematical, though not necessarily detrimental. In fact, to many it even suggested a prospect of larger income. For if this freedom should stimulate larger production, what was to hinder the Koms from also liberating their slaves and then exacting from them at least a half of the increased production? This would place them in the attitude of benefactors, while adding to the revenues derived from their slaves. What difference would it make, whether they remained chattel or free slaves? If it put more butter on the bread of the Koms, why care if it did the same on the bread of the slaves?

But the Kones looked not so favorably upon the measure, though they dared not state the reason why. They well realized the extent of their extortionate exactions. These had, in fact, gone far toward nullifying the incentives to greater effort on the part of their slaves, so that their free slaves fared little better, if any, than the chattel slaves. What they now dreaded was, lest in the end it should oblige them to be less exacting in their terms to their free slaves.

The Kones were unable to offer open objections to the proposal; though, between themselves, they bitterly denounced it. They were too shrewd

as politicians, to attempt any present movement, in which they would be without the united support of the Koms, and when the body of free slaves was about to be doubled and inclined to the support of the Crown. So their whispers were confined to hints at waiting a suitable occasion for precipitating a revolution by which to return to the ancient status under which all the toilers would become chattel slaves.

When the Komyim again stood before the Melka, it was to announce their approval of the project, and to assure her that if it turned out as was expected, they would also adopt the same course toward their chattel slaves, and let them all alike enjoy the blessings of liberty.

So the matter ended; and the next day I made the decree public, appointing the third day after as a holiday for my slaves, and in the interim instructing my stewards what steps to take. Through the stewards the overseers were to be informed, and the word was to pass from them to the newly emancipated slaves on the day set aside as their holiday.

The stewards and overseers were to remain in charge of the lands and the buildings on them, and also the work outfits both on the lands and in the various shops in which production was carried on. They were also to control the course of operations

and take charge of the general output. Out of this output they were to first set aside the portion previously taken by the Crown, leaving all the remainder to be divided between the toilers, according to the manner of their toil. If in charge of overseers, their portion was to be gauged by the number of hours they had labored; but if they cultivated a tract on their own responsibility, they were to receive that portion of the produce remaining, after the Crown portion had been set aside. . . The Crown portion would not increase if they toiled harder, or more diligently, or with more intelligence—the full surplus remaining for their benefit.

The overseers were also to inform them that habitual idleness would not be tolerated. If they toiled not, neither should they share in the fruit of the toil. Freedom did not mean a privilege to idle away their time and let their families starve or shift for themselves. They were warned that persons who acted in this manner would be segregated and made wards of the Crown, obliged to submit to being trained into habits of industry, and meanwhile suffering much loss of liberty they might otherwise have enjoyed.

On this holiday, to make the fact of their freedom more clearly impressed upon their minds, a great ceremonial was repeated in all sections, in

the course of which the lash of the overseer was burned in a great bonfire and the announcement made that neither the material lash nor that of hunger should ever again be used to coerce them into a surrender of more of their produce than was necessary for the support of the Crown; and that the higher and nobler incentive of retaining for themselves the surplus product of their toil was hereafter to take the place of the lash.

Looking far ahead, I could now clearly discern the approach of Atlism. I had started an influence that was soon to add mightily to the popularity and power of the Crown; through which, coupled with the enlightenment following upon the step I had taken, destiny was bound to shape future events so as to culminate in Atlism.

## CHAPTER VI

### From Free Slave to Free Man

The ferment of a great and wholesome revolution in Omshola became visible with the reaping of the first harvest on the Crown lands, now that its free slaves were to have for themselves all the produce in excess of previous standards.

Its toilers had never sweated so joyfully nor plodded so diligently, nor watched so keenly to forestall every difficulty and prevent everything threatening loss and disaster. They felt that the labor and care they bestowed upon the crops were being given to that which was to become their own. Instead of groaning, they began to sing at their work; and though the work had almost doubled, they seemed to feel it less.

And when the crops had been marketed and the portion of each was allotted to him, their eyes were delighted with the prodigious abundance. They found they all had much to spare; and the surplus they took to the market houses and traded for the produce of artisans, who also were blessed with a surplus to dispose of. . . So in the

homes of both the toilers on the lands, and in those of the artisans toiling in shops, there was a plenty of foods, and of household utensils, and embellishments, beyond all previous standards.

Nowhere did all this Crown land prosperity display itself more visibly than on the happy countenances of its freed slaves that now beamed with joy where formerly they had exhibited sullen scowls.

And now the Koms also, seeing the magical change wrought on the Crown lands, took steps to free the slaves upon their lands, though only to divide with the toilers the surplusage they would produce. And even the Kones, in order to keep up appearances, were also forced to reduce their exactions, so as to take no more from the toilers than did the Koms.

So a new freedom began to breathe in all quarters of Omshola, whose free slaves well realized they owed it all to their Melka—the new ruler on the throne. Through the successful results of the step I had taken, I became endeared to them; and, day by day, the power of the throne became stronger, enabling me to push on the work of emancipating the toilers of Omshola.

With the might of the toiling multitudes behind me, I was soon able to reduce the military forces of the Crown; and that without breeding discon-

tent, since there was no lack of work to do in shop and field—profitable work, under conditions making toil attractive. For the same reasons, I was also now able to greatly reduce the force of useless servants and hangers on in the palace. So that when the next harvest came, the portion of the toilers became much larger than before.

In the years that followed, the toilers replaced their slovenly one-room huts, in which poultry and pigs had shared their beds with them, and had erected huts holding each several rooms, and separate ones for the poultry and pigs. The change was a marvelous one, shown in greater cleanliness in households and on the person.

It was wonderful to behold the greater skill and speed with which artisans now pursued their callings, doing all things on a much larger scale, that enabled them to apply more labor-saving methods. And this was also true upon the lands, where labor-saving devices were coming into use, and productive efficiency seemed to advance with leaps and bounds.

So a new Omshola was rising, to supersede the old—an Omshola wonderfully expanded, with shops and factories more than trebled in dimensions and in efficiency, and with broader and richer fields than had ever here been dreamed of.

Along with all this, I also had their market

houses enlarged so as to meet all the demands of the new prosperity. . . . And here the kibos were rapidly performing the functions of money; for there was constantly more selling and buying with kibos being done than there was of bartering—a practice that was rapidly waning.

To guard against the hoarding of kibos, I now issued a decree forbidding their accumulation in very large quantities, lest an artificial scarcity be produced and profiteering with them should induce hoarding to a dangerous extent. For the present, this might answer, though I well realized that in time I should be obliged to make the kibos unhoardable, just as we in Atlo made our shekels unhoardable.

Among other changes I instituted, was the establishment of schools in which all were to learn the rudiments of ordinary speech and knowledge—to read, to write and to reckon. Girls were also to learn the rudiments of housework, and boys to acquire the training of finger and arm and limb in the use of ordinary tools. They were also to learn how to raise vegetables, rear plants and trees, and to understand the principles governing the growth of plant life.

So attractive now became labor on the Crown lands, that as news thereof filtrated into the regions surrounding Omshola, large numbers of its

savages drifted in and took work upon the Crown lands. They came ever in greater numbers also, not waiting till famine might drive them to accept servitude, as it had done in past generations. All this went to add mightily to the power of the Crown, which was recognized by all toilers as their true friend, their liberator and their staunch supporter.

I had thus far retained full possession of the lands, the buildings and the work outfits on the Crown lands; for their use I had made no charge beyond what was required for the support of the Crown—a charge I had also materially reduced.

But my future plans contemplated that all these properties should fall into the hands of the toilers using them, and that the burden of supporting the Crown should be divided between *all* the toilers of Omshola. My plans also contemplated that the properties now used by the toilers on the Komyim lands should ultimately belong to the toilers, without having to pay any further toll for their use. All this was to be effected by purchase, paying for the Komyim properties, those of both Koms and Kones, in regular instalments drawn from their surplus produce till the whole was paid for, and the toilers finally all were possessors and were

able to toil without having to support in luxurious ease any idle or unproductive class. These steps were to complete the emancipation of the Omsholan toilers. In this purchase the Crown land toilers were to contribute a portion, in lieu of what they saved in obtaining their properties from the Crown without charge.

After all this had been achieved, the property laws prevailing in Atlo were to be enacted and enforced, together with the use of a complementary kibo, to be used in the same manner as the bronze shekels of Atlo. By these steps Omshola would be gradually Atlonized, and Atlism, or Perfected Capitalism, established.

Already there was spreading a spirit of discontent, arising from the fact that toilers were beginning to ask themselves why they should go on supporting in luxury a class of drones on one side and of charlatans on the other. For with the broadening of their minds, under the new conditions, they were daily losing faith in the pretensions of the Kones.

Realizing also the danger of a violent uprising, I promptly summoned the Komyim to an audience, in which I detailed to them the state of the public mind, and warned them of the danger imminent. . . . I also now announced to them the plans I had designed by which the toilers were to buy

their complete liberty. There was no reason, I urged, why the Komyim should draw a *perpetual* income from the toilers. Whatever services the Komyim may ever have rendered were necessarily of a *limited* character, and by no stretch of the imagination could be justly transformed into a *perpetual* claim.

My plan therefore contemplated the purchase of the properties in question, to be paid for in not less than ten years, during which time the Komyim would have ample opportunity to adapt themselves to the new conditions. I have no objections to either Kones or Koms; but I would have them prepare themselves to earn their livelihood by such services as were acceptable to others, whether these were as counselors in matters spiritual or temporal. But such services must not be imposed on people against their will, by indirect threats of deceitful misrepresentations. Crime in spiritual affairs is to be equally as punishable as in affairs temporal.

That the nobles were horrified at the audacity of my proposals was to be expected. They were dumbfounded and alarmed.

The Kones, who were more deft of tongue, and better versed in the law, were first to rise in protest.

"What?" shouted Kone Sobrati, foaming at the

mouth, "are we who have for untold generations held these properties unchallenged, to be suddenly deprived of them by a mere trick—by purchase?"

"Then you do not regard purchase as a fitting title to these properties? How then, pray you, came your ancestors into possession, and by what means did you retain possession all these generations?"

"Partly by conquest, Gracious Melka, and partly by surrender of famished savages, came we into possession"; was the reply, "and by the strong arm we have held our possessions. We never sought other title."

"Very well," I replied. "Then we shall have no change in the law of property. Its title is still to inhere in the power of might. Your rights are not to be disturbed in the least."

A gleam of light brightened the dour countenances of the Kones, on hearing my remarks. But it quickly passed away when I followed, remarking that while the law governing the title to the property was not to be changed, the position of the might, by which it had been retained, had been materially altered. The power of might now inhered in the toilers and the Crown. That alone had changed. Hereafter the arms that were strong in toil would also be strong in retaining possession of the properties requisite to the pur-

suit of labor. The refinements of gentlemanly idleness and delusive charlatanry were no longer sufficient claims upon a life of luxurious ease."

It was with downcast mien, and no little murmuring, that the Komyim left the audience chamber, after dismissal. And now the die had been cast, and Omshola was about to enter upon a new career of progress.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE END OF THE GORO GOROS

THROUGH four years of steadfast resistance had King Mozo led the struggle against the dread man-beasts; and though his term of office was nearing its end, he kept on with indefatigable pertinacity.

Steadily had he narrowed the cordon by which the goro goros were being driven eastward and confined within smaller territory. Lacking cultivation, the territory also was steadily yielding less and less toward the subsistence of the foe. With the more thorough barricading of the oros, the superapes also were securing fewer human victims on which to feed. With each successive year they were betraying loss of spirit and more signs of emaciation. If they had begun to place the Atlons under siege, that condition was now being reversed. They were themselves actually under siege, cut off from return to Atlora through the fact that they had been driven beyond the underground outlet to Atlora.

It was now getting to be a case of subsisting more and more on the bodies of the slain goro

goros—thus being forced to make of their own bodies their commissary stores.

Quite different was the state of affairs among the Atlons, who were by this time suffering no lack of food or raiment or comfortable housing. . . . Trade was in progress, if not in full normal volume, at a rate allowing industry to go on unabated, diminished only by the labors of the men devoted to resisting the enemy and producing war supplies. . . . While conditions had been considerably perverted during the first stage of the war, such had been their enormous stores of supplies that it caused them to suffer no want. The state of industrial organization was a powerful resource and war weapon, than which none better could have been desired. It was in fact the most potent of all their implements of war—the dominant one.

It is not to be denied that it was a terrible cruelty to impose on the beasts the dire torture of slow starvation. But what other course was left in dealing with these monsters, who could not be made captives of war, as human beings might have been? Their unconquerable ferocity had to be met by a fight to the death; and as long as their numbers were large, it would have been foolhardy to attempt their slaughter in any other way.

It is true that in wars between nations of human beings, no such necessity exists to palliate the horrible alternative. Neither does the fact that the torture by slow starvation carries with it the ruthless slaughter of infants and the aged, of mothers with infants on their arms and women in the full blossom of youth, help in the slightest degree to extenuate the fiendish inhumanity of such a course. . . . When nations are assailed with this foul weapon, than which there never was one fouler, what wonder that they are ready to retaliate with what otherwise were indefensible modes of warfare?

Pitiful now became the sights coming daily before our eyes, the gaunt monsters slinking from place to place, mere skeletons of their former selves, staring through their wan features with empty gaze, and now and then giving vent to lamentable moans or guttural groans, as from internal pain. They were beginning to die; and it was no uncommon sight to see them fighting fiercely among themselves over the carcases of the deceased.

Tired at length of these revolting sights, an aggressive campaign, to effect their final annihilation, was ordered. And as their numbers had by this time become considerably reduced, it took not long before we saw the last of the goro goros.

The terrible conflict was finally over, and once more peace reigned in all parts of Atlo; and after a brief respite, the work of restoring the land to its normal state was begun. There was much to do in removing the barricades from the oros, restoring the avenues from the delapidated condition in which the beasts had left them, and also restoring to cultivation the large tracts of land that had been occupied by the superapes. But all this was a trivial matter in a land so profuse with industrial facilities as was victorious Atlo.

It is needless to say there was great rejoicing in all parts of the land, and that the orotos resounded with celebrations of the great triumph. The whole nation was thrilled with the enthusiasm of a well earned victory.

While all these events were transpiring in Atlo, the constant report reaching me from expeditions sent to the mouth of the tunnel to Atlo were disappointing. It was always the same. The beasts still held the ground at the Fiery Pit, making exit impossible, and information far from attainable.

During all this time, my whereabouts, and the question whether I were still living, was as much a mystery as ever to my parents and my betrothed. Whatever shred of hope they still clung to, was obscured in the shadow of their despair.

My parents had, during the first period of the

war, been kept busy attending and nursing wounded Atlons, not only of the Red Star, but many brought in from neighboring oros. In the later stages, their lives jogged on in the usual currents, differing from normal times only in their close confinement within their own and adjoining oros, since underground communication had been established. But until the last month of the siege, they dared not venture on the streets or avenues.

With the war ended, Atlons at once decided upon beginning a campaign for the ultimate annihilation of the dangerous beasts on the adjoining peninsula, Atlora.

The peninsula of Atlora lay directly west of Atlo and was connected with it by the isthmus of Long Neck. It was a region covered with towering mountain ranges and penetrated by mighty streams. It had also barren plains of seemingly endless stretch, on which hunger and thirst were more menacing than the wildest beasts. . . . Beyond it lay the peninsula of Atloraba, making a turn directly southward, into a torrid region. This was a land of miasmatic swamps, uninhabitable to man, and infested with mammoths of gigantic stature, griffins, dragons, flying serpents and the elephantigos who resembled elephants but were of double their height and of many times their bulk.

These beasts were flesh eaters, who would catch lions and tigers and devour them as cats would mice. There were also serpents and reptiles of all degrees of venom; hideous vultures as large as an ox; venemous bats and insects; and creatures of endless variety, all devouring each other and teeming in great profusion. But their mammoth dimensions, and the distance from Atlo, made these sluggish monsters less dangerous to Atlo than were the nearer and fiercer beasts of Atlora.[1]

In this campaign, planned for the ultimate extermination of all dangerous beasts in Atlora, expeditions were to be undertaken, in a preliminary way to determine the routes to be fitted as permanent roadways. These were afterwards to be fitted for the rapid conveyance of troops and supplies. They were to have suitable forts and stations at convenient distances; and wells were also to be dug where water was otherwise out of reach.

It was on one of the first of these pioneering expeditions that my betrothed, Loab Ben Phra, had been assigned at the close of the superape war; and concerning some of his experiences, we will learn before long in his own words.

[1] Besides being antediluvian, these beasts belonged to a distinct continent, thus accounting for their marked variation from modern beasts.

## CHAPTER VIII

### Good News from Atlo

More than a year had elapsed since the purchase of the Komyim estates for the toilers had been made, and affairs in Omshola were daily bristling with numerous tokens of progress and prosperity, all moving along at an unprecedented pace, when a succession of eventful occurrences followed each other.

The first of these came, following an unusually tempestuous night in which one incessant roar of terrible thunder blasts besieged our ears, and the crystal roof of the land became one unbroken surface of intensely blazing gems, now darkening and anon bursting in dazzling brilliance—a grand color exhibition that fascinated in the midst of the awful terror it inspired.

Here and there, where the roof was of thinner body, the lightning blasts crashed sections into splinters or melted a portion of the surface, leaving open gaps through which poured the waters from the clouds in the upper world. Of such gaps there were many in the land, serving well to help in purifying its air. But in a far off region there

was one wide gap through which ran down in one perpetual stream a vast body of water that cut its way out into the sea, forming on the way a mighty river. Other rivers penetrated and helped to water the lands of Omshola, but of much smaller dimensions; and one of them carried its waters to a broad lake that seemed bottomless, never rising above its usual level.

But all these matters are only incidental. On the morning after the tempest, what was the surprise of the Omsholans to see the lands surrounding Omsh covered with a great sheet of water, more than a cubit in depth. How far the flood extended, none knew. It was a new experience, causing much alarm—especially to the superstitious, who attributed it to the anger of the spirits in the upper world.

From the numerous alarm signals coming in, it was to be surmised that the flood was spread over a wide region, much of which was more deeply immersed.

In this emergency, it was not the Komyim, but the toilers, who were first to interest themselves in dealing with the situation. Learning of their zeal, I summoned a goodly number of them to the palace, where I allowed them to give their views as to the best way of dealing with the situation.

The general opinion was that this body of water had come from a rising of the sea to a height above the level of Omshola; and this view was further sustained by the brackish taste it had.

By dint of much questioning, I learned from them that to the south, perhaps a day's journey off, there lay a stretch of low land that might serve as a feasible basin for the waters, if they could be transferred thither.

From one of them, who was quite familiar with the territory surrounding Omsh, I also learned that by cutting through two intervening ridges the waters could easily be drawn into the projected basin. Seeing also that this man, Dolfo by name, had experience in ditching operations, I at once submitted the task to his charge, allowing him to engage the necessary help and guaranteeing all costs to be paid from the Crown funds, at a liberal rate.

So it was that work was at once begun; and on the third day thereafter, the waters had so subsided that affairs soon moved on again in their usual way, as if nothing had intervened.

It was only upon the second day, after I had received reports that the last of the ridges was being cut, and that the outlet would soon be ready, that a deputation of Komyim made their appearance with loud lamentations, deploring the dread-

ful situation. They saw the ruin of Omshola in the stretch of waters that now engulfed it. Agriculture could no longer be pursued; and even travel and transportation could only with the greatest difficulty be carried on. What was to be done?

Large numbers of the Kones had succeeded in reaching the temples, where they were now pleading with the spirits of the upper world to abate the flood. They promised sacrifices, and they tore their hair and inflicted bloody gashes upon their flesh, in expiation of the sins they had committed, for which they believed the spirits had sent the flood. . . . But they went much further, in interpreting the wrath of the spirits. To the people assembled they attributed the inundation to their violation of all former precedents in taking possession of Omsholan properties—a thing unheard of before. Woe to them, lest a great inundation follow, and drown them all. Surely this would happen, unless they returned to the Komyim the properties now in their hands. So the Kones actually believed, deluded by the common weakness of mortals in clothing their wishes with the garb of reality.

Had not the flood soon subsided, there is no doubt that such representations as those made by the Kones would have gradually influenced the

superstitiously inclined toilers, and led them to return to the former status of chattel slaves.

Another event, that ultimately proved of far greater moment, occurred shortly after, though at the time it attracted little attention beyond the small circle of my palace intimates. This was the unaccountable disappearance of my little minstrel, Borok, of whom not the least trace was to be discovered.

He had often hinted to me his thorough distrust of the Kones, warning me to be on my guard against their machinations. While outwardly submitting to the new order, they would secretly be conspiring to restore the previous order by working on the superstitions of the people. I had confided to him my desire to some day visit Atlo and enter into a commercial treaty with it, by which a mutually beneficial trade could be engaged in between Omshola and Atlo, and under which also a mutual alliance could be effected that would bind to each other the two lands in supporting the perpetuation of Atlism. . . . To this suggestion the dwarf had pointed out the danger of communication through the tunnel being obstructed by a walling in of the passage. He had some idea that another outlet might be discovered more practicable for the purpose than the tunnel; but no more was said concerning it.

He had also often heard me tell of the fabulous value placed abroad upon the gold and the precious gems that here abounded in such profusion as to be worth no more than the labor of picking them from the ground. He seemed to be greatly impressed by the fact, and often sighed when thinking how impossible it would be to leave Omshola if the beasts should prove victorious in Atlo.

Surely, all this vast treasure of gold and gems was wasted, remaining in Omshola. He must have been dreaming night and day of the possibilities in store for the person who managed to reach the outer world with a supply of these gems.

As a freeman, he had the right to go whither he pleased, and I therefore made no attempt to intercept him, believing, in my heart of hearts, that he had gone forth in search of the other outlet from Omshola, of which he had hinted.

Following the disappearance of my minstrel, came the pleasing report that the beasts had departed from the territory adjacent to the Fiery Pit, and that people were moving about in Nungo Park without restraint. This was glad news, implying the successful end of the great beast war.

Now at last the opportunity was open for a visit to my parents, my betrothed and my native

land. Of course there would be many changes, and who knows how many friends missing. Would all my people be there to meet me? If so, what a glad reunion it would bring about. I could hardly await the day, my heart so throbbed with expectancy.

But how was I to leave Omshola, and how meanwhile provide for its safety? Why not appoint Kosoki Samba as regent in my absence? He had been faithful in setting me upon the throne, and true also to the interests of Omshola. If any man was worthy of the trust, it was Kosoki Samba.

My first step was therefore to hold a consultation with this man, who was still holding office as Crown Counselor. To him I now confided my intentions, adding by way of further motive my desire to effect a treaty with Atlo by which the two lands would be united in defense of Atlism, whether assailed by beasts or by conspirators in either land. The treaty was also to establish commercial relations between the two lands.

Put in this shape, Kosoki Samba was inclined to favor my departure, but warned me to return as soon as possible, lest, in my absence, the Kones should stir up a revolution. For, like my little minstrel, he regarded the Kones with distrust.

Together we planned to make my departure as

early as possible and with as little show as would be compatible with such a move—thereby giving to the Kones as small a start as possible in carrying out their aims. In addition to this, the report was diligently to be circulated that my stay was to be for a long period—a subterfuge that proved of much avail on the day of my return, after having had to submit to many unforeseen delays.

Before another moon had passed, the expedition was started in royal state, followed by a corps of deputies empowered to add their approval in signing with me the contemplated treaty, and also a body of attendants and servants. The entire party were mounted on tofos, the long horned beasts of burden of Omshola. We took with us an abundant supply of kibos and also of gems, to be traded for Atlon productions and services, such as we should need.

In publicly announcing my departure, Kosoki Samba was made regent in my absence, empowered to rule until my return, three moons hence. The trip through the tunnel was a tedious one and led me often to think of the suggestion made by Borok of another outlet from Omshola; and I even resolved on my return to have steps taken for the discovery of some such outlet.

## CHAPTER IX

### The Plot of the Kones

That my departure from Atlo had so readily been assented to by the Komyim was due to no love they bore me—rather welcoming my proposed departure as an opportune occasion for setting upon the throne one of their own members, recovering their properties, and compelling the freedmen now in possession to return to their previous status of bondsmen.

At the head of the plotters was the astute Kone Sobrati, lean, sad-eyed and gloomy, whom the spirits of the upper world allowed no rest till the old order should be re-established. All the Kones were ardently supporting the movement, determined to revive the old order under which they might secure a fat living in return for a lean service.

Even the Koms had been won over, and stood ready to mount Kone Sobrati upon the throne, when the time came. They all regretted the liberation of their slaves; and far more, the sale to them of their lands and improvements. They did not ignore the commercial value to be paid them

by the purchasers; but saw clearly that in the end, they would be reduced to an equality with their former slaves and obliged to earn their bread by the sweat of their brows. It was that dire necessity that jarred against their sensitive nerves and refused to harmonize with their inherited custom to live in luxury and ease and the pompous pride of a class of superior beings.

Hardly had the party of the Melka, therefore, been gone a day, when burly Kom Zum, with a strong party of Koms, followed it, keeping far enough behind to escape discovery. With them were a force of masons and a lot of tofos laden with sacks of cement, ostensibly to make some repairs at the tunnel outlet.

Arriving at the tunnel outlet, the masons were told that an outlet at a higher elevation was to be cut through the rock wall, by which the Melka would have a more convenient means of entrance on her return. But before the cutting was begun, the old entrance was to be sealed.

Misled by this cunning explanation of the object in view, the artisans entered upon the task without the least suspicion, gathering all the loose rocks they could find and cementing them into a rising wall which they filled up with cement all the way to the tunnel outlet. To this, as the wall rose higher, they kept on adding more cement, so that

in a few days the cement filling reached to the roof of the gallery.

It was at this stage, that the Koms drew their swords and mercilessly slew the masons, hewing their bodies into fragments which they sank into the cement before it had had a chance to harden. When the cement finally hardened, there was no visible trace left of the massacred masons; and a barrier of fifty cubits length of solidified cement, as impenetrable as rock, closed the tunnel mouth. Their object had been achieved; and now the success of their plot was assured.

Upon their return it was reported that, while making necessary repairs in the tunnel, the party had been assailed by a much larger party of Atlons, and the masons had been captured and borne away, while the Koms—armed with swords in whose use they were skilled—managed to effect a safe retreat. . . . For days they had remained sufficiently near, to observe the actions of the Altons, who finally barricaded themselves behind a barrier of rocks they had raised and behind which they were filling in cement till up to the roof of the tunnel—the thick wall of hardened cement forming an impassable barrier now separating Omshola from Atlo. This ended the dynasty of Atlon Melks. In future, Omsholans would have to find rulers from their own people.

But what capped the climax of their mendacity, was the added report that my entire party had been slain by the Atlons, and my body had been exhibited from a distance to the Koms, by whom it had been identified. Not only was I no longer among the living; but were I still living, my return would now be absolutely impossible.

With the work of the Koms such a complete success, the plot began to thicken. The Kones, under the direction of Kone Sobrati, began to appeal to the superstitions of the Omsholan temple visitors.

With tear-bedimmed eyes, and voices of heart-breaking anguish, the Kones now made the announcement from their temple pulpits, detailing minutely how their Melka and her entire party had met their deaths at the hands of the enraged spirits of the upper world; and how that these had thereafter also sealed up the mouth of the tunnel, that no more spirits might be induced to leave the upper world to rule Omshola. "Our dear Melka is dead. Let us mourn her loss!" were invariably the closing words of their appeals.

The people had ever been accustomed to take the words of the Kones as the very fountain of truth. How could they now doubt them? So they deeply mourned the loss of their Melka—their beloved liberator, and dearest friend.

The Kones were far too shrewd to make any immediate reference to the succession. Before the first hint of this aim could be given, the minds of the people must be wrought up with a superstitious dread, and also by degrees educated to knowledge of the iniquity of their elevation to the level of their unquestionable superiors, the Komyim.

Taking advantage now of every passing thunderstorm, the Kones stormed the superstitious minds of the Omsholan toilers with reminders of the unappeased wrath of the spirits, who were demanding a return of the people to the old order. Nothing less would ever satisfy them; and in the meantime the air overhead would again and again be heard roaring the wrath of the enraged spirits, and the roof of Omshola would blaze with the spirit flames spit against it. Nor would their wrath be felt alone in this manner; for as each Omsholan freedman hereafter entered the spirit world, the awful sin committed in aspiring to the level of the nobles would be punished by burning in fires eternal. Let each of them therefore think well, before withholding the properties that had for ages belonged to the Komyim, and that now were in their hands.

Such were the wily appeals by which the Kones looked to restore the iniquitous status under which

the toilers of Omshola had been shackled in bondage. By degrees the minds of the toilers were being prepared for a return to the shameful status of their former bondage. Habits of faith, superstition and fear are terrible foes to contend with; and the Omsholans were not equal to a contest with such a combination.

Following these adroit appeals, the day soon arrived when the Kones were ready to take active measures for placing a successor on the vacant throne.

Their first step was to publicly declare the throne vacant, calling for a meeting of the Komyim to elect a successor. In reply, Kosoki Samba, who was acting as regent, demanded the formal presentation of evidence to prove the declared vacancy.

Kosoki Samba had his suspicions regarding what had really occurred in the tunnel, though he had no evidence with which to controvert their representations. His step aimed mainly to cause delay, in the hope that I might in the meantime return to expose the terrible fraud they were perpetrating. Yet, believing that the tunnel mouth had at least been sealed, it was mere hoping against hope.

It is true, he might have enlightened the benighted toilers as to the falsity of the representations made concerning the attitude and threats of

the spirits above. But it was very doubtful that his word alone would have had weight against that of the Kones. Besides, he also realized that, even if he induced the toilers to stand up for their liberties, it would only provoke a civil war whose outcome would be dubious and disastrous. What was he to do? In the face of the representations that were to be attested, the throne would be indisputably vacant, and some successor would have to be chosen.

Decked in their finest garbs, and their faces wreathed in smiles, the Komyim were at length assembled in the royal audience chamber of the palace, to elect a successor. In an adjoining hall a sumptuous feast was in preparation to follow the formal election; and the odors of the cooking viands were permeating the gaily decorated audience chamber, causing many a hint at the hurrying on of the work, which was only formal—the decision having long since been made to place Kone Sobrati on the throne.

Long-visaged Kone Sobrati, for once in his career wearing a smiling countenance, addressed the assembled Komyim in glowing phrases inflated with lofty promise proportionately empty of meaning. He assured his auditors that democracy in Omshola was to remain a permanent boon to all

its people, though its properties were to be replaced in the hands of the Komyim, who were the time-honored class fitted for their administration.

So far did his liberal spirit also carry him, that he assured to all toilers a chance to acquire properties, after the Komyim were restored into possession—each toiler doing so through his savings —though he well realized how meager these necessarily would be; and this was to be the ideal of Omsholan democracy.

The address was greeted with loud shouts of applause.

And now the balloting for a successor was to begin, ushers distributing blank ballots among the respective members of the Komyim. . . . When the result of the first ballot was announced, it was plain that the majority of them were mere compliments to various members. . . . At the next balloting, Kone Sobrati was within but three votes of election. . . . A third ballot was taken, and lo, Kone Sobrati had every vote of the assembly.

The court herald was on the point of formally announcing the result, and proclaiming Kone Sobrati as successor to the throne, when their ears were besieged with an unearthly, terror-inspiring sound, seeming to command a halt in the proceedings. From all sides of the palace came the terrifying sounds, shriek after shriek. Could it be

the spirits, knowing the fraud about to be perpetrated, had descended to stay its progress?

While the Komyim quivered with fear and blanched faces, a force of armed men stalked into the audience chamber—men covered from head to foot in shining armor, and with stern faces of a type unknown to Omsholans.

But what added further to their terror, was the entrance of their Melka on the arm of Kosoki Samba, who led her to the throne, and with a significant gesture bade her be seated.

The regency was ended, and I once more occupied the throne of Omshola.

In clear and incisive tones I now addressed them:

"So, members of the Komyim, you had me slain by the tales you spread, and my return cut off by having the tunnel opening sealed, and the poor masons, who did the work under your misrepresentations, coldly murdered. Then you carried your deceit further by misrepresentations made to the toiling people as to the attitude of the spirits above toward their liberty. You sought to again fasten shackles on their limbs—to again deliver them into bondage. Do you know that your crime was treason, and is punishable with death?"

Upon hearing these dreadful revelations, the

nobles all threw themselves upon their faces and began to grovel in disgusting self-abasement.

I could not look upon the sight; so I commanded them to rise, and then I resumed:

"Your offense is not alone against me and the realm of Omshola, but also against the upper world—the land of Atlo, with which I have joined in a bond for mutual defense. Into their hands will you therefore be committed, to be tried and dealt with according to their mercy. As for myself, and for Omshola, we wash our hands of you. The Atlon warriors now in this hall will take you in charge, and under their care, you will be transported at once to the land of Atlo—there to be tried and dealt with according to your offense."

At a signal from me, the Atlon guard took them in charge, and marched them in a body to the train of war jubros waiting outside to bear them speedily from the realm.

So ended the conspiracy, and the career in Omshola, of these trouble makers; for I realized that whatever sentence was imposed on them, they would never again be allowed to return.

## CHAPTER X

### Borok Springs a Sensation

At dusk on the day previous to Borok's disappearance, the dwarf might have been seen mounted on a swift tofo, headed for the outskirts of Omsh. He was clad in a dark canvas suit made for the occasion, of strong fiber, and fitted with more than the usual number of pockets. The coat lining was also sewed up in squares, at the top of each of which was visible a small opening, through which they could easily be filled with either gold or gathered gems.

He was evidently bent on making a long journey; for he carried on his back a pouch filled with dried meats and cakes to be used only when no longer able to find the usual food at the wayside inns, upon which he mainly depended.

Desiring also to avoid recognition, he deviated from the direct route, so as to give a wide berth to the village of his native home. On the sixth day he arrived at what was the last settlement before entering the region of wilderness extending to the eastern wall of Omshola.

For three wearisome days he patiently pushed his way over marshy lands and through briery

jungles, in which the heat was stifling. Then in the middle of the day, reaching an elevated piece of ground, there suddenly loomed up before him the eastern wall of crystal, here of a dark hue, giving to the surroundings a gloomy aspect.

To Borok, however, the appearance of the wall imparted a feeling of joy, telling him he was soon to ascertain whether the object of his adventure was attainable, as he had surmised.

By evening he had arrived at the wall itself, which was here no higher than three cubits, and rose with a slight incline till it merged in the roof, a hundred cubits above. Here he found a convenient place to rest, picketing his tofo to a small tree that was surrounded with an abundance of rich verdure, on which the beast might feed.

Following the wall northward on the next day, and closely scrutinizing its entire length, he suddenly came on a spot he seemed to recognize. For quite a distance the wall was here completely concealed by a clump of thorn bushes. It was back of this very clump he believed that lay the opening he had in his youthful days once discovered. Was this the place? And if so, what was there beyond? That he had never ascertained, but was now determined to learn—provided he found the opening.

Expecting to proceed alone on his further jour-

ney, he let his tofo wander at its pleasure, after having wound the picketing thong around his breast. He also added some to his store of hidden gems in the lining of his coat and filled a still empty pocket with a lot of nuggets and coarse sands that were rich with gold.

With his knife in hand, he now proceeded to slowly carve his way through the bushes, till he reached the wall; and thence he forced himself on northward, patiently sweating and toiling as he progressed. All this time he was crawling upon hands and knees; and he was already nearing the end of the bushes, and just ready to abandon further search, when, to his amazement, a pale light became visible, gleaming through the bushes only a few steps ahead. It was the very aperture he had been looking for.

Reaching it, he crawled through; and then, rising and passing around a rising knoll, a great sight confronted him—a vast surface far down beneath his feet glimmering like a sheet of liquid emerald. Overhead rose a dome of solid blue, in the midst of which blazed a huge round face of crimson flame. Could this be the face of the Great Spirit ruling over all the worlds, of which the Kones had taught him? Was this the Lord who, in his anger, spoke in voice of thunder and shot long sheets of flame against Omshola's roof?

"Could this be the face of the Great Spirit ruling over all the worlds, of which the Kones had taught him?"

Awed by the spectacle, and filled with dread of this mighty being, little Borok fell upon his face, and in solemn words pledged his loyalty to the will of this monarch over all the worlds.

He was now surely in that other world, of which he had heard so much from his beloved Melka. He could not be mistaken.

Glancing around him, his eye soon caught sight of what he recognized as an ancient stairway leading down to the sea level more than fifty cubits below. Though largely hidden from the eye by an overgrowth of weeds, the stairs were clearly discernible. But before descending, he gathered some large stones which he piled up behind the aperture, lest it be discovered by possible pursuers.

It took him not long to make the descent; and after a day's lonesome journeying along the sea-coast, he came to the outskirts of the coast city of Umla, which lay at the western extremity of the Atlic Canal. In this last stage of his journey, he used the utmost precaution, moving stealthily on among the numerous huge rocks at the foot of the mountainous embankment. This was for fear of meeting with any of the beasts besieging Atlo. But he met with no trace of them; and finally, discerning the approach of a human being, he ventured to show himself.

From this Atlon he soon learned that the beast

war was nearing an end—the superapes being confined within a narrow strip of territory, in which they would soon be exterminated. His appearance as a stranger in the land made it necessary to confide to the Atlon the fact of his coming from Omshola, of which he had much to tell. By the advice of this man, he at once proceeded to Umla, and there presented himself before its Dodor or governor. To the Dodor he now confided his story concerning the land of Omshola and its riches, in proof of which he exhibited a lot of the gold and gems he carried on his person.

The story seemed incredible, though the gems he exhibited, and the fact that little Borok was a stranger and of a different type from the Atlons, went far toward winning at least some consideration.

Led by the Dodor to his oroto, Borok was formally introduced, and allowed to tell his story. That another world should exist so near to Atlo, and yet never have been heard of before, seemed unbelievable. What were they to think of it?

But when he spoke of their Melka as a woman who had been abducted from Atlo while visiting a friend in the city of Nungo, there were several among his hearers who recalled hearing of the mysterious disappearance of this woman.

The news of his strange arrival, and of his tale,

was now bell-signalled to the authorities at Atlic, who immediately replied by asking for the dispatch of the stranger to Atlic, where they would examine into the details of his remarkable revelation.

So it came that, borne in a swift jubret, Borok the next day found himself in the city of Atlic, lodged in White Wing oro as a guest of the State. Taken afterwards to the House of State and brought before Melk Mozo, he was soon engaged in picturing to that high official the details of Omsholan life and its government, its crystal roof and gold-besprinkled ground, of its Komyim and its free toilers—of the old rule and the new rule instituted through the wisdom of their Melka—Queen Metel.

King Mozo was particularly interested in the route by which he had left Omshola, and also that by which Metel had been brought into that land.

It was not long after, before Melk Mozo had dispatched two separate expeditions to investigate and report on these gateways to Omshola. The expedition to the sea shore entrance was accompanied by Borok, and had no difficulty in finding the opening and effecting an entrance. What they saw verified his story, and they waited not any longer to return and report what they had found. . . . The other expedition descended the Fiery

Pit, but only to find, instead of an opening or a door, the traces of an opening that had been sealed up with cement. Efforts to penetrate this barrier were all made in vain; and so the expedition had to report failure.

With the existence of Omshola verified, Borok found ready listeners to his tales concerning this strange land, and was being invited to entertain in one oroto after the other—a service his profession of minstrel well fitted him for, and in which he delighted. It opened a new and highly remunerative field for him, and led him soon to dismiss all thought of using the gems of Omshola to buy castles and lands in the outer world. It is also needless to say that what he learned in Atlo went far to dispel all such sordid thoughts.

# CHAPTER XI

## The Invasion of Omshola

In leaving the Omshola tunnel, I was seated in a closed conveyance that was raised to the level of Nunga Park, when its door was opened by one of my attendants, and I was led to a seat, to await the exit of the remaining members of the party.

It was early dawn, and our first move was to find a park pavilion, and there take a good rest before proceeding any further. Accompanied by an attendant, I then made an incursion into the town, to arrange for my further course.

The first thing I therefore did was to visit Flying Arrow oro, to see if my friend Lesba was still there. At the oro I was sorely disappointed on learning that she had only recently left for the city of Gegra, on the western frontier, so as to be nearer her husband, who was soon to start on a pioneering expedition in Atlora. The oro mother who received me was not the same one that had taken me in charge on my previous arrival; and so I wasted no time, but left, to engage a number of jubros to take my party to the city of Atlic; but

not before I had sent my folks a bell-signal dispatch, saying "Someone's coming up tonight from Nungo. Will be a surprise."

From the jubro agent I learned that the beast war was still on, though in its final stage. Within a few days they would have the last of the beasts exterminated. They were at present hemmed in within a narrow strip of territory, and were on the verge of starvation.

With my attendant, I now stepped into one of the jubros; and soon we were at the park entrance, where our party joined us, and was speedily being borne on toward our destination in Atlic. We made no stops, save for food and refreshments, which I obtained for the party through bartering away my store of kibos—these being gladly received and accepted as rare curios, which in this land they surely were.

It was just the hour of dusk when we finally reached Atlic; and making straight for the Red Star oro, I was rather astonished to see a large assemblage before the oro, shouting their greetings; while my parents, at the curb, rushed forward to embrace me. One after the other seized me in their arms, and with tears of joy gave vent to their boundless delight.

I was immediately ushered into our family quarters, and my party was taken to the oroto. To

each of them was assigned a private guest room, and every attention given to enable their toilet to be made prior to re-assembling for supper in a dining hall reserved for their exclusive use.

"How did you know, mother," I afterwards asked, "that the dispatch was from me?"

"We had heard but yesterday a report of your strange adventure. We could at first hardly believe it; but your dispatch seemed to confirm the truth of the report."

"That I have come from this strange underground world, of which I am the queen, is true, every word of it. But I cannot comprehend how news of the affair could have reached Atlo. That puzzles me."

"The report came to Atlo through a dwarf, who seems to have discovered a new outlet from Omshola. Do you know of such a person?"

"Why, that must be my court minstrel, Borok, who disappeared mysteriously only a few days before my departure. Is he still in Atlo?"

"I believe he has left," interposed my father, "to accompany the expedition sent out to investigate his discovery. They are expected back in another day, and you'll then have a chance to see him. . . . But did you know that the Omsholan tunnel mouth in the Fiery Pit had been located,

and found sealed up with an incredibly hard cement? It will never be used again."

This unexpected news led me at once to suspect the closing to be the work of conspirators. It was done undoubtedly by the Komyim, with the object of barring my return and setting on the throne one of their number, through whom the toilers of the land would again be doomed to bondage. I could attach no other significance to the act.

How important now was the discovery made by little Borok! I could have hugged him for joy, to think how my return now would take the conspirators by surprise, and save my people from the degradation and wrong sought to be imposed on them. I did not need to await the return of the expedition. The presence of Borok in Atlo was proof enough of the genuineness of the discovery.

What joy we had in the hours now spent in rehearsing the varied experiences of the past years, those of my parents in Atlic, and mine in the land of Omshola. How much there was to tell of, and how much that was reminiscent of my former days in Atlo. Regarding my betrothed, I learned that he had served creditably throughout the war, winning more than one decoration for his bravery; also that he was at present engaged in one of the many pioneering expeditions sent into the wilds of Atlora.

On the following day, I went, accompanied by my father and my official deputation, to be presented to King Mozo.

The news concerning me, he had learned through Borok; and also of the sealing of the Omsholan tunnel mouth. He was therefore delighted to learn that I had come and might now take advantage of the newly discovered outlet to return and surprise the conspirators, who had manifestly taken advantage of my absence to bar my return.

When I mentioned to him the main object of my call and visit to Atlo, to enter into a treaty with Atlo by which the two lands would be united for their mutual defense and for their mutual benefit in carrying on trade between them, he cordially approved the idea. Through Minstrel Borok he had already acquired some insight into the extent of Omshola and the form of its government, as well as the goal toward which it was being guided. All this he heartily approved; and so it was not long before a treaty was formulated, to the satisfaction of both principals.

The substance of this treaty, which was afterwards duly signed by the members of my deputation, and also by the proper signatories of Atlo, called for the trade between the two lands to be reduced to a basis of barter, though for some time

kibos might be acceptable as commodities—there being a certain prospect of a large demand for them in Atlo, to serve as curios. As soon, however, as the simultaneous use of silver and bronze shekels could be inaugurated in Omshola, the use of bronze shekels would automatically confine trade to a basis of barter. As in Atlo, its properties were all to be made inalienable, by endowing all persons, at the proper time, with a property portion, as the reader already understands. None were to be born as either chattel or free slaves. Its world was to be divided into no such riff raff as lords and outcasts. They who by birth inherited the NEEDS of civilization were also to inherit its MEANS. Society had rights over its members and it also had obligations to them.

In the future government of Omshola, whether it was to be monarchical or democratic, or a mingling of the two extremes, all authority was to be limited within the purposes for which it was given. Usurpation of authority, and evil use of power, were to be severely dealt with, penalties ranging according to the degree of usurpation. . . . Political organizations had invariably to state their objects in definite form; and when these had been achieved, they passed out of existence. They were not allowed to develop into domineering machines; nor, as in Mamnist lands, to become the instru-

ments of organized wealth, ruling all parties in the major matters of government by which profiteering was kept fortified, and in minor matters keeping up to the people the pretense of self-government. Such political masquerading was not to be carried on in the new Omshola. Its scheme of government was not to hold down its masses while their pockets were being picked.

The uses of both money and wealth—the dominant implements of industrial co-operation—were also to be confined within the purposes they had to serve. They were under no circumstances to degenerate into implements of perversion and extortion. They were to remain as SERVANTS of toil, and not its MASTERS.

With the administrative departments of government given long terms of office, when not for life, but subject to ejection on gross incompetency or misbehavior, separated from and not in control of the department assigned to guard its fundamental law—the primary requisites of Atlism—there could be little danger of any serious disturbance ever interfering with its affairs. . . . Its fundamental law was also made practically unalterable, by requiring three successive majority votes of the people, given at periods of ten years apart for any modification.

With this program decided on, preparations were at once begun for the invasion of Omshola, and my re-establishment on its throne, should such a step be required.

Since the roadway for a long way on the sea front was impassable for vehicles, we made use of a few large jubrets to convey our expedition to the spot of the stairway, which, with Borok's help, was finally distinguished. A suitable landing place was also located not far away; and after prodigious labors, the stairway was remodeled into an inclined plane, extended with numerous twists and turns, so as to make the ascent by jubros possible.

The next step was to enlarge the opening through the wall of Omshola; and after that, to cut down and remove the thorn bushes in the intervening jungle. . . . With a large force of men all these things were easily accomplished; and soon our jubros were pushing their way through the wilds of Omshola.

Arriving in the settled portions of the land, we hurried forward, letting our jubros shriek their terrifying sounds into the ears of the natives, who thereupon hid in their houses, allowing us to move on toward Omsh without news of our coming reaching the capital before us.

Arriving at Omsh, we at once made for its royal palace, which we surrounded with our jubros,

within whose circle none were allowed to pass. . . . I then sent Borok for Kosoki Samba; and, after a brief consultation with him, in which I learned of what had transpired in my absence, and of the present state of affairs, I at once arranged to have our jubros shriek an alarm that would arrest all further proceedings in the audience chamber. Then, accompanied on the arm of Kosoki Samba, and preceded by a force of armed Atlons, I was taken into the hall of assembly and seated on the throne, in the manner previously described. As to what followed, the reader already knows.

# *PART III*

## UNITED AT LAST—AS TOLD BY PRINCE LOAB

# CHAPTER I

## The Beast Behind the Cloud

Several years had I now been traversing the wilds of Atlora, engaged in the pioneering branch of Atlo's military service, encountering dangers, and enduring hardships I would never have deemed possible for me to survive. But such is life—a grand episode of plunging into dangers, courting doubts and facing perplexities, while ever dreading and resisting them. How many bogeys our energies, in their pent up confinement, raise, meaning no more than shadow to substance.

I was by this time a lieutenant, serving under Captain Kapso, the husband of Metel's friend, Lesba. Poor fellow, doomed soon after to meet a dreadful fate!

How deeply some of our adventures remain impressed upon my mind! None more so than that in which we slew the great mammoth—the fiery dragon we caught napping in a vast cavern. How stealthily we approached the monster; and then, unexpectedly, as one of us stumbled over a rock,

he was awakened, and with a thunderous roar sprang at us, scattering us in a panicky fright before we had the chance to fire a single poison dart into his huge body. I still wonder how we managed to get out of the cavern.

To this day I pride myself on the fact that, reaching the exit, I was the first to recover my senses and to puncture the breast of the mammoth with one of our deadly darts. Others followed my example; and before one could count twenty, as many darts were embedded in the monster's flesh. He was now practically done for, all but the fearful convulsions of his gigantic frame, wildly flopping about with tremendous bounds and thumps, with deep bellowing and blood-curdling shrieks.

Not till the beast had ceased to move, did any of us dare to emerge from beneath the ledge of rock on the cliff side, where we had taken refuge —long after his struggles had ceased, and the flames issuing from his huge mouth had subsided.

Six members of our force were slain in this encounter, and as many more had received serious wounds, while not one but was covered with bruises or lamed with sprains.

There was another strange adventure we had, in which our entire corps remained treed in an oak

grove for nigh two whole weeks, imprisoned there by a host of spiked reptiles, called daggersnakes, who closely resembled the crocodiles I had seen in the river Nil, save that they were much larger and had bodies covered with horny projections sharp as thorns. The hunger and thirst we suffered on this occasion were excruciating; and already we had given up hope of escape from the doom of starvation.

We had been following along the banks of a great river, approach to which was barred by an endless line of these monsters. Desiring to ascertain how aggressive they were, we had determined on having a trial combat, for which purpose we had singled out a big bull daggersnake basking in the sun all by himself. While this combat was in progress, those not engaged therein climbed into the tree tops of an oak grove nearby, from which to witness the affair. . . Though our men succeeded in slaying the beast, they had a narrow escape—taking refuge finally with their companions in the grove, since the shrieks of the dying monster had attracted to the spot a large number of beasts from the river bank.

Contrary to expectation, however, the beasts would not take their departure—more and more of them gathering in the grove, and remaining motionless as if to keep us under siege.

That was evidently their intention, for they remained on guard nearly two weeks that seemed longer than eternity, while we had nothing better to assuage our thirst than the chewing of the oak leaves and naught else to appease our hunger than the bitter acorns with which the grove abounded.

We were already reduced to mere skeletons when, glancing downward, one morning, we beheld the entire ground black with creeping things I was told were scavenger ants. They were on the march, and the daggersnakes dared not impede their way lest the countless myriads of tiny creatures should devour them as if they were no more than so much vegetation.

It was after the scavenger ants had passed, that we decided on a desperate course—descending while the beasts were still hiding in the depths of the stream, and fortunately thus making our escape.

Our jubros, whose food stores had been untouched, were still where they had been left; and so we clambered hastily into them and speeded beyond reach of the beasts, before we stopped to appease our hunger and thirst. We were cured of all further desire to witness any combats with daggersnakes, and were happy to have escaped with our lives.

But what were these adventures compared with that which we had a few days later, terminating so disastrously, I never can think of it without tears gathering in my eyes.

Upon what trifling incidents our fates often hinge! Who would have thought that the dark eye glasses in my pocket at the time of being cast upon the seashore at Atlic, were to save me from a dreadful calamity, through which my body and my soul would have been forever merged in a granite image of myself. Of our entire corps, I alone escaped this awful doom.

How this came to pass, I will now endeavor to explain. My eyes having on divers occasions suffered from the intense glare of the desert sands, I one day bethought me of wearing those dark eye glasses of which I but now made mention. These afforded me such substantial relief, that I continued to wear them; and because of their covering my eyes at the time our corps was assaulted by a mysterious beast never before encountered in Atlo, had I the good fortune to escape with my life.

We were following the course of a wide but shallow stream that crept along, with many turns, over the sandy soil. Though easily fordable at most points, one might also anywhere encounter therein treacherous quicksands.

Now a peculiar feature of this sluggish stream was its frequent disappearance, only later on to reappear from the underground channels it had meanwhile followed. This queer diversion into the bowels of the earth, reputed to be infested with legions of foul spirits, demons and jinns, belonging in the domains of Sat, the Evil One, gave us much uneasiness, as if auguring the approach of some impending catastrophe. For who had ever heard of a stream acting with such contrariety?

Of daggersnakes its water contained no trace; but of deadly serpents the number was beyond count. On its banks we frequently encountered huge hillocks formed of nothing but these writhing creatures, all interwoven in one loathsome mass, with hissing heads protruded at all points.

Our aborigine guide, little Nobo, who was familiar with the region, and had a keen scent for every change in the state of the atmosphere, was standing near me, one morning, sniffing the air, with a very puzzled expression upon his countenance.

"Him smell no much like!" was the muttered refrain he kept constantly repeating, while dubiously shaking his head. "No like him smell, no like him!"

Nothing more explicit could be drawn from the native; and his baffled air made me apprehensive.

To all my attempts to coax out of him an explanation, he made no answer; and then suddenly pointed, triumphantly, to a faint speck on the horizon.

"Him cloud, him smell. Nobo sure him cloud smell!"

What could the little rascal mean? Whoever heard of a cloud possessing an odor?

Time brings forth many surprises; and for me, this was one of them. For soon after, both Lieutenant Marco and myself were able to detect the peculiar odor to which our guide had referred. It was now noticeable as a distinct and pronounced odor, as if coming from burning sulphur. There was no way of accounting for its presence in the open desert, any more than of attributing its source to a cloud.

Steadily the cloud was coming nearer, growing more ominous as it approached.

"What sort of devil can it be, hiding in the cloud?" I asked, throwing out a random guess.

"It's some sort of devil," my comrade jestingly retorted, "for it's my humble opinion, I assure you, that the odor comes from some fiery creature —if not a devil, perhaps a dragon."

"If it's a dragon, Marco, he'll soon have to show himself. He can't keep on forever follow-

ing the uncertain course of an idle cloud. He surely isn't glued to it."

"But what if this were a cunning old dragon making use of the cloud merely as a screen, the better to surprise his quarry, in swooping down upon it?"

"At any rate," I concluded, "he'll bear close watching; and I, for one, will keep my eye on him."

While intently observing this mysterious cloud, we were not a little astonished to see the dark mass make a sharp turn from its previous course —an act so uncloudlike and contrary to all our previous conceptions of cloud decorum, it put our nerves on edge.

For a dragon to suddenly swerve from its course was to be expected; but for a cloud to do so, was in defiance of all precedent. Was a dragon really behind it? If so, what had become of him, after the swerving of the cloud? Can he also have made the sharp curve?

The queer antics of this odorous cloud were a puzzle to baffle wiser heads than ours. Nor was the matter any nearer solution when, soon after, the cloud took another flight, alighting upon the crest of a grassy knoll not far away.

Nobo, seeming to comprehend our bewilderment, shook his frowsy head, entreating us to stay

away. "No go him! No go! Him devil—kill you. No go him, no, no!" he fairly shrieked at us.

But we officers were broadminded Atlons, to be frightened by no devil. We had also an example to set for our followers.

So, heedless of the guide's expostulations, we determined to investigate the strange cloud. Accompanied therefore with an ammunition jubro, and each of us carrying his blow gun and darts, we followed Captain Kapso to the outskirts of the cloud-capped knoll, leaving our force of civilians with the camp.

Arrived at the base of the knoll, an impenetrable darkness confronted us, impregnated with a powerful sulphurous odor. If the cloud really veiled some horrible mammoth, devil, dragon or other weird monster, it were well, so we reasoned, to avoid entering its dark interior until, after skirting its edges, we had obtained some glimpse of the beast it held within.

While thus engaged in peering into the dark mass, an unearthly shriek suddenly issued from its interior—proclaiming unmistakably the presence therein of some dread terror, a mammoth, devil or unknown horror, about to spring upon us.

Our blow guns were all charged with darts ready to be fired into the beast; but unfortunately,

the creature remained invisible beneath its thick veil of smoke.

How eagerly we craned our necks to secure the merest glimpse of the horror; but all in vain. Then unexpectedly, and all too soon, our eyes were blinded by the flash of two great eyes glaring an intense light into our faces. My blood instantly seemed to be curdling in my veins, as if atrophied under some dread spell. I should have instantaneously succumbed, but for intuitively concentrating every shred of vital energy into one tremendous mental effort, under which the force of the spell was broken, and I regained some control of myself.

With a superhuman energy, I leaped into the ammunition jubro, and started it off. Its driver sat beside me, staring vacantly—a mere form inanimate. I happened to touch his hand, only to feel it hard as rock, clammy and cold. He had been turned into stone.

Reaching the camp, I found the civilians in a flutter of excitement, and quaking with fear. They had heard the weird cry of the beast, and seen the terrible light flashing from its eyes; and they had also noted its paralyzing effect upon the corps, with a single exception left standing immovable in their posture of tense gazing, with heads still craned forward, like a group of lifeless statues.

Observing the staring figure of the jubro driver at my side, they sadly shook their heads; and pointing to Captain Kapso's corps, cried with one accord: "Let's away, comrades, lest we also perish in this manner!"

The guide, Nobo, whose timely warning had gone unheeded, now assured us the beast was nothing less than a basilisk—one of the various flying serpents haunting the fens of Atloraba. This beast, half bird, half serpent, exudes from its body a heavy vapor, much resembling smoke, and emanating from the furnace heat of its body, whence are derived the intense lights flashing from its eyes.

Nobo's version was undoubtedly correct, since rumors of such a beast had been current in Atlo; and even in Phoenicia; and also, while at Athens, reports of its dreadful powers were not wanting. There it was known as cockatrice, and often as tsepha, as well as basilisk. That the cloud was merely the exudation from its body, readily explained why beast and cloud kept such close company—as if they had been body and skin.

We lost no needless time in starting upon our mournful journey to Gegra, where report would have to be made of the disastrous catastrophe to our expedition.

On the way back, the thought came to me, what if this terrible beast were to invade and ravage Atlo? What if this were merely a straggler in advance of a host of similar beasts? What hope could there be for Atlo in a conflict with beasts whose mere glance could slay men by the hundreds? And flying in the upper atmosphere, how was their advance to be checked? Our ironclad jubros would be of small avail against such a foe. The very thought of this dire menace made my poor head swim.

I had heard of a wonderful magician named Gauril, who resided at Gegra, and was reputed a perfect genius. For three years he had been engaged in designing a magic bird that was to soar in the heavens, carrying upon its back human riders—a sort of air jubro. Perchance this man might succeed in perfecting his bird, perched on which, we might cope with the dread basilisks. Why not see this man, and stir him up to hasten the perfection of his bird.

This I determined to do. But what a slender thread it was on which to hang the fate of Atlo!

To the home of this famed magician I nevertheless hastened, on my arrival at Gegra, finding him in Raven Oro. The tale of our sad experience appalled him, and was the greater shock, since a beloved nephew of his was a member of the

stricken corps. The deplorable fact, however, only spurred him to apply greater energy to the completion of his bird.

"My bird, I'm sure, will do the work, friend Loab," said he, "and go far in helping us destroy the basilisks. There's only a single detail still to be mastered; and then she'll be ready to soar over the very clouds!"

How well I knew this hope had been his light from day to day, for two long years, and that his three days might stretch into three centuries. Only too well I knew this; and yet I also began to hope; for despair is an addled bug, that catches at straws.

From Gauril's I proceeded to military headquarters, as the only surviving officer of our corps, to make an official report. I had hardly finished, when Chief Matla, all in a tremor of agitation, recited to me the substance of a message just received from Mother Mafra. The seer had been visited in a dream by the goddess Atl, who, from the heavens above, had witnessed the fate of our corps. She had also recognized in the basilisk mask the demon god Mam. To this evil spirit, the struggle had been merely a trial combat, whose outcome had already decided Mam to raise hosts of basilisks in Atloraba, with which to invade Atlo and destroy her people.

Preparations for the new movement had already begun in the desert of Korol, where a host of the beasts were assembled to cover the desert sands with their eggs; after hatching which, the young were to be allowed to mature, and were then to be led on to Atlo.

As a counterstroke, the great god AT, aware of the wicked design, had already begun the frustration of Mam's scheme by hurling from the clouds vast showers of hailstones that were smashing the basilisk eggs as fast as laid. This compelled the beasts to leave the desert and to conceal their eggs in caves. But the caves, being cold and damp, permitted not of any hatching until after the Evil One, from the lower world, had shot upward into that region vast heat blasts, through which the eggs might in time hatch. AT'S counterstroke, while not preventing the eggs from being hatched, was of inestimable service for the delay it caused, as shall in time be seen.

Returning to the shop of Magician Gauril, to urge him to speed his work, I was pushed aside by the frenzied man, who was rushing madly hither and thither among the junk of queer contrivances lumbering up his shop.

"Can't you see, my friend," he shouted, "that I've no time to spare! My bird's all ready, and

I must take it at once to military headquarters. It's all together now, and in yon sack." With these words, he grabbed a huge sack, flung it over his shoulders, and started with a limp to drag it off.

Seeing the sack was much too heavy for him, I relieved him of the burden—striding off with it, while he followed panting at my heels.

"Do you know I've tried my bird already on the oro roof? Yes, friend, it's at last perfected. Got the missing idea just after you left. It works like a charm! Why, before a week is past, you'll see me soaring over Atlic with one so big, your people will think it's a dragon coming after them!"

We soon had the model at Chief Matla's for another trial; and there, to the amazement of all spectators, it performed wonderful gyrations as gracefully as a live bird. It was undoubtedly a complete success; and should a full grown craft do as well, it augured well for Atlo's outlook in the approaching basilisk war.

So pleased with the exhibition were Chief Matla and his staff, that Gauril was at once given a free hand in further operations, and assured all the help, financial and otherwise, he would call for from Atlo's Push Wing.

A fact that Gauril had at the time failed to mention was that his final inspiration had come from the goddess Atl, whose spirit had mingled with his own and so stimulated his imaginative powers as to immediately evolve the idea he had so long vainly striven for. Many a time since has he mentioned the part the goddess Atl had in perfecting his great bird.

## CHAPTER II

### The Basilisk Invasion

Granted a brief furlough, on my return to Gegra, I hastened to pay a visit to my early friends and benefactors at Atlic, the worthy physician Gomar and his spouse Mafra. Were they still living, and had they heard aught regarding their lost daughter, my betrothed?

I met them both at the Red Star, where they gave me a hearty welcome, both betraying signs of having somewhat aged through the sorrows and anxieties to which they had been subjected. For the first time I now learned of the safe return of Metel, and of her strange rise to the throne of Omshola—a world I surmised as lying underneath a portion of Atlora that was inhabited by neither man nor beast, being one barren vast of impenetrable crystal soil, chippings of which I had there gathered and still carried about my person.

The joy upon learning of the rare fortune of my betrothed was not without its sting, leaving us parted now by an impassable abyss as wide as that of death. How, occupying the exalted sta-

tion on the Omsholan throne, could I now offer her my hand? I said nothing to her parents. Let the secret of our betrothal be buried with our bones. No one should ever learn of it from my lips; *that* I vowed.

To both Physician Gomar and Mother Mafra, I had come as one risen from the dead, though they carefully concealed the fact. Had they not known of the destruction of the entire corps of Captain Kapso? And was not I a member of the corps? Imagine then their astonishment when I informed them of the manner of my escape; and the joy they felt, on being told of the success of Gauril's model bird.

It was late that night before we separated, listening to my recitals of experiences in Atlora and their tales enlightening me regarding the world of Omshola and Metel's success in wielding the scepter there.

"Is not the story of Omshola like a fairy tale?" suggested Mafra.

"So also," I replied, "is all history, rightly viewed and rightly told—but a fairy tale for adults, and one adults should never despise."

"And you once thought Atlo was a fairy world, did you not?"

"And think so still—in fact much more so than Omshola."

Sauntering along on Grand Avenue, in Atlic, a few days later, I beheld a great concourse of people gazing skyward and showing a strange alarm upon their countenances. No wonder, seeing that from afar could be seen approaching a great mammoth, buzzing away with a weird, ear-splitting sound. . . . . Suddenly it dawned upon me that this was nothing less than Gauril's bird, enlarged and made in the form of a gigantic wasp, whose sonorous buzzing was enough to frighten men.

Nearer and nearer it approached, until the crowd began to scatter, flying from it in terror. I could soon distinguish the figure of a man mounted upon its back. It was none other than my friend Gauril.

"Be not alarmed, good people," he cried, "I'm riding neither dragon nor basilisk, but an artificial wasp, to sting basilisks with. I'll be down with it in an instant."

It was a sight to wonder at, to see the way the mammoth wasp came circling down—finally striking the earth with a loud thud. It was my good fortune to help extricating the magician from its mysterious depths.

"Didn't I tell you, Loab Ben Phra, I'd soon be soaring over Atlic?" he ejaculated.

"So this big iron mammoth is your bird grown

up, Gauril?" I responded. "Why, he can outbuzz and outfly any wasp ever seen, and I believe he'll also outsting any wasp before his career is over. You can well be proud of the achievement!"

"Proud, eh—of what? Of the extra brains Atl put into my head? Don't, pray, fill my head like an empty bladder, and let it go on forever noising its emptiness."

Brave Gauril! He had come all the way from Gegra, on the back of this artificial bird; and no jubro on solid earth could have made the journey in double the time.

Iron works in all parts of the land were already engaged making preparations for the manufacture of wasps large enough to carry two men on them, one to steer and the other to fire poisoned darts into the beasts, after first having struck them with illuminating rockets that splashed over them large surfaces of a luminous paint, such as the Omsholans had used in lighting up their tunnel. So luminous was the paint, that objects were made visible through a barrier of smoke.

Schools were also to follow, for training men for this service.

All this augured well for Atlon success, provided the invasion began not too soon.

Months had passed, and still the Atlon iron

works were kept busy night and day, the operatives changing shifts every three hours, and taking but little time for rest.

So the wasp fleet kept on growing, till it could count its mammoth birds by the tens of hundreds, with a much larger number of experts to man them. It now began to look as if the basilisk hosts were to meet with a reception such as the Evil One had not reckoned on.

Squads of the giant wasps were already being pushed to the front, gradually forming a complete line across Long Neck, where the beasts were expected to enter Atlo; though the possibility of their attempting entrance from the sea shores was not being overlooked.

The wasps stationed across Long Neck were soon daily scouring the adjoining territory to report the movements and the approach of the enemy.

Larger and larger grew the fleet, until there were three lines stretching across the isthmus. And now we were beginning to feel secure, let the invasion begin when it would; for the later it began, the larger a fleet of wasps would there be ready to resist its advance.

The day at length arrived when our scouts reported the approach of the basilisk hosts in a

vast black cloud stretched over the entire horizon. Well did we know what lightnings were hidden within the dense clouds, what deadly bolts were ready to be flashed upon us. But apart from our wearing dark eye glasses, we also had our bolts of death to hurl; and it was to be seen which were the deadlier.

None too rapidly for us approached the beasts of Mam; for we were one and all, as if on needles, awaiting them.

Stationed on the third line, it was easy for me to see the wasps of the first line rise, on receiving orders, whirling in large circles as they mounted higher and higher upward, till above the host and following behind them, as they poured volley upon volley of darts into their huge bodies.

By the time the second line went into action, mounting upward, we already heard the raucous cries of pain and anger mingled with sounds of falling beasts as they came hurtling down from the heights above, adding fresh wounds to those received from our darts.

Soon our line had its orders to rise; and now, amid a pandemonium of horrible noises, we did our circling upward, and were soon pursuing the dark line of beasts. We were now quite near the brutes; and it seemed as if every dart we fired sent down its separate victim with a bellowing cry,

while from below came up the piercing groans of the dying beasts.

On and on we now kept up the pursuit, the beasts filled with terror from what they felt was an invisible foe wreaking merciless havoc upon them. Turn whither they would, their fearful death weapon was useless, no foe coming in range, though the rasping buzz of the wasps was constantly ringing in their ears.

Yet with all our destruction, no noticeable diminution seemed visible in the dark mass. There seemed no end to their number. All the way to Atlo followed the relentless pursuit. It was impossible to hold them back. Streams of them we also now saw, in the distance, entering from the northern seaside.

And now we began to discern a new fact—that within their ranks were also large numbers of fire-spitting dragons. With these we would also have to reckon. If they entered Atlo, their breath might prove an incendiary torch to spread a holocaust of flame over the land, working its destruction.

The city of Gegra was already menaced, and its people were fleeing in all directions, but mostly toward Umla, which was a seaport from which they could scatter, taking jubrets as their means of conveyance. But more than half the population

found refuge in the underground tunnels still left, by which the oros were connected with one another, and in which stores of food could be safely kept.

Bell-signal reports were being dispatched in all directions, announcing the danger, and advising the people everywhere to guard against fire, by putting the underground channels in preparation to meet the danger.

All day long was the pursuit continued; and special detachments were also sent to combat the beasts attacking towns and cities.

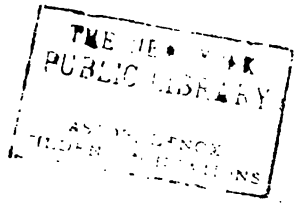
By nightfall we were well into Atlo, still firing our deadly missiles into the mass of mammoths.

And now at length the superiority of our wasps began to be manifested; for, whereas they were still fresh and tireless, the beasts began to betray signs of exhaustion—large numbers of them alighting to the earth, gasping for breath and alternately groaning from sheer weariness. There we now had them at our mercy, slaying them with great rapidity and loss of little time.

Rapidly the ranks of the foe were now being decimated; and the less there remained of them, the greater dispatch were we able to make in finishing the rest.

By midnight there was little more to be seen of them; and then we began to scour the land in

"By midnight . . . we began to scour the land in many directions . . . to make the extermination of the beasts complete."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many directions, seeking far and wide to make the extermination of the beasts complete.

Meanwhile the city of Gegra had suffered the most, nearly half of her oros having been razed by dragon flames. Other towns in western Atlo also suffered losses, though none so severely as Gegra. In their attempts to escape, a number of jubros were also wrecked by the monsters, and not a few passengers were slain.

In the closing hours of the terrible conflict, I happened to launch a dart into the body of a dragon engaged in pushing his flaming snout into an oro window, while clutching with his talons the sill beneath, so as to support himself there till the fire became well started. More than a score of oros had the beast in this manner set afire. And now, suffering excruciating pains from the dart, the monster made a swift dash at my wasp, overturning it, so that both wasp and dragon came crashing to the earth.

For me, this was the end of the battle—having not the least recollection of what followed.

## CHAPTER III

### The Loyalty of Metel

As in a dream, I had been lying—time and place fitfully changing in riotous incongruity, taking me alternately whirring over tall mountain peaks and across interminable desert wastes, and again letting me rest by the side of cooling streams while balmy winds kissed my cheeks. Now I sat, mounted on the back of a giant wasp, and anon on the neck of a soaring serpent, spear in hand, giving chase to grotesque beasts and weird specters with which the air was filled. Now it was plunging through sheets of blazing flame; and anon we pierced our way through mountains, as if mere shadows in our path. There were no disturbing doubts to mar the dire intensity of the life I was leading.

In such a delirium, days and weeks must have passed, while I was lying helpless in the hospital room of Red Star oro, at Atlic, in charge of physician Gomar. Many a time I recall spitting back at him the nauseous, bitter stuff with which he was dosing me, which at one time he had actually to

force down my throat. . . . It was after what seemed ages of this weird life, that I one day awoke, to see, bending over me, a fair-featured woman, whom I suddenly recognized. It was my betrothed.

"Metel! Metel! Is it you?" I joyfully cried, doubting the reality of her presence.

"Yes, Loab, it's your own Metel"; she responded, "but do be quiet, for you're not yet well enough to hold conversation. So rest, dear, and believe me, I'll return as soon as you're better."

With a smile radiating sweetness, and with throwing me a parting kiss, she was gone.

As I felt the sweat oozing from my brow, I seemed much relieved. But tired, oh how tired I was, soon falling into another sleep.

The day at length arrived when I was able to sit up; and Metel now was frequently at my bedside, giving me comfort. As I grew stronger, our conversations became longer and more free, soon demonstrating our mutual loyalty to the betrothal. As soon as I would have sufficiently recovered to go about, I looked forward to taking steps for our marriage.

But now, earlier than I had anticipated, Metel took the matter into her own hands, acting under the privilege belonging to her high station. While I was still in the robes of a convalescent, she one

day entered, decked in simple but elegant bridal garments, and with a becoming garland over her brow. Accompanying her was an official priest of the hearth, and a priestess, and also Metel's parents.

Without many words, it was explained to me that our wedding ceremony was now about to be performed, to which I had not the least objection. And so a very simple ceremony was at once enacted, consisting of verbal queries put and answered; and, following these, a document was presented to us for our joint signatures. This document, which not only bound us together, but also bound us into a union with the State, was afterwards to be filed in the archives of the State —each of us being furnished a certified copy of the same.

The vital part of the bond lay in the fact that the State had assumed the obligation to allow us to approach the altar as free and independent man and woman—each, regardless of the other, endowed, the man with a property portion in the shop and the woman with an income-provided home. No shadow of dependence was to degrade the union; and for this reason they were expected to choose mates with such care and caution as would insure to their offspring a happy and united home. The man was pledged to labor with suf-

ficient diligence to justify the provisions made by the State for the family welfare, and also to serve the State in such ways as were needful to its preservation. And the woman was pledged to so preside over the home as to make it a haven of rest for the weary and indisposed, and to make it attractive for those needing entertainment. As the husband was ruler of the shop, so was the wife to be ruler of the home. Both husband and wife were to give and receive counsel, but each was to be the final authority in their particular spheres.

So it came about that we were united for life, without having, on my part, undergone any of the usual fussy preparations attending such a union.

It did not at the time impress me as strange that the marriage was so hastily performed. But it afterwards occurred to me that never, since my illness, had I glanced into a mirror; and also, that no mirror had ever been within reach. Upon the only instance in which I had made a suggestion of a desire to have a look at myself, Metel had adroitly changed the subject.

Now, however, I resolved to settle the matter, once and for all. A strange attendant, passing by the door, I hailed her and, not without some persuasion, managed to induce her to bring me a mirror. My first glance into it gave me a fearful shock. Into what hideousness had my features

been distorted! What a repulsive monster had I become! And to this horrid thing had the radiant Metel attached herself! What a sacrifice! How dared I hold her to the bond?

Still in a tremor from the shock, I began to reproach her on her next appearance: "How could you deceive me so, and do yourself such wrong? Oh Metel, Metel, your sacrifice was too great."

"Think not, my Loab, that it was only your outer self I loved. Though the rind of the fruit was bruised, its sweetness to me has not been altered. I love you still, Loab mine; and even through the horrid mask you wear, I see ever your real self. It would have been cruel to deny yourself to me!"

"But gazing upon me, do I not seem loathsome in your eyes? Tell me the truth, oh Metel, my own darling!"

"My eyes are already accustomed to the sight, as my mind is to the fact; and the distortion makes no such harsh impression as you would think. But lest, to strangers, the mask of distortion should give a shock, I have brought you a milder mask to wear over the other. Here it is."

With that, she handed me a soft, silken one, with which to hide my ghastly features; and this thoughtful gift I still wear, and will never part with as long as I live.

Metel had remained in Omshola during the period of the basilisk war, seeing to it that Omshola contributed her share in fighting men and in supplies, toward the defense of Atlo.

Atlism had by this time been fully established, and her people bore grateful remembrance of the part Atlo had played in their deliverance. . . . But as soon as the crisis was over, she hastened to pay another visit to Atlo, both to see her parents and to ascertain what was known concerning my fate. There it was, she found me in the care of her father, Physician Gomar, who had brought me to Atlic on a canal jubret.

During the intervening time, prior to the war, Metel had been busy Atlonizing Omshola, much assisted in the work by the members of the deputation that had accompanied her there, and had there seen much of its operation. It is true, considerable of the work had been previously accomplished. But the final steps now taken were to introduce a coinage of silver and bronze, similar to that used in Atlo; and also to introduce the Atlon system of making their properties inalienable. In all this work, however, they had merely to copy after what was already tried and in vogue in Atlo.

So far as the sums still due the Koms and Kones for their properties was concerned, they

were not confiscated, but regularly paid to the families of the banished nobility.

The fundamental requisites of Atlism were now incorporated in constitutional law, to be altered only after three successive elections, held not less than ten years apart, in each of which the alteration was favored with a majority of the votes, both male and female.

A push wing was also instituted, and given much the same powers and duties as that in Atlo.

The throne was also to be made an elective office, retained for a period of ten years; and with its incumbents subject to removal and severe punishments for any willful abuse of the power placed in their hands.

As soon as these changes had been effected, and a successor to the throne elected and ready to enter upon the duties of the office, Metel was to retire—the Omsholans, under Atlism, being fully capable of governing themselves.

Among the numerous tasks begun by the Omsholan Push Wing was the reorganization of its homes so as ultimately to evolve in oros similar to those of Atlo. . . . They began by dividing the urban lands into uniform squares, erecting on a few of them, at the time vacant, groups of detached homes, with an oroto in each group. Into

these groups of dwellings were taken the residents on squares most in need of new structures. The vacated squares were then built on, square after square, till the entire city had been rebuilt. . . . Thereafter only whole squares at a time were to be reconstructed, instead of having to endure the perpetual nuisance of interminable obstructions on the streets and the constant scattering of dirt and filth upon them which attends promiscuous building.

## CHAPTER IV

### To Atlonize the World

Atlo had triumphed. Her fleets of giant wasps had overcome the basilisk hosts. Every corner of the land had they scoured, and not a trace of basilisk or dragon was left. The huge carcasses of the slain had been immolated. Thus had the mighty hosts of Mam's chosen beasts been annihilated; and armed now with her giant wasps, what more had she to fear from the power of this goddess of gain and the beasts in her service?

In all the burned localities, the State carried on the work of rebuilding and restoring the land to its former condition.

Great therefore was the rejoicing in every Atlon oro upon the return of the victorious warriors; and manifold were the demonstrations made of their hearty appreciation and enthusiasm.

As the weeks sped, out of all this patriotic enthusiasm something new crystallized. The spirit of Atlon thought took wing, looking beyond her boundaries. There it saw a world still groaning under the yoke of oppression, lorded over by

idling nobles of all sorts, who lived in vice and luxury, and sapped the vitality of the masses. It was an inverted order, in which rivalry of ostentation and love of power led the proud lords into the perpetration of every cruelty. They saw a world, in which the few feasted and the many starved; in which every man jostled his neighbor for the crumbs dropping from the festal board, and in which peace was a delusive hope. . . . They saw a world divided against itself, nation arrayed against nation, secretly when not openly, and filled with the lust of plunder by violence and by profiteering—a lust for lands and slaves and loot. In this world, men stooped to the lowest depths, in order to rise—wholly blind to what followed.

From this debased world came to their ears piteous cries of hunger and distress from famishing babes and heart-broken mothers. They saw its people so sorely bitten by dispossession that even character had been devoured, and only the beast remained. The great body of humanity, they saw as grovelling outcasts—vast numbers sunk so low that all incentives to rise had been destroyed. It was a hideous spectacle, that which abroad was called real life.

Oppressed with this image of a distorted world, they took refuge in the divine purpose to regen-

erate it. A grand crusade was to be organized, with that noble object in view. AT'S world was, through Atlism, to supplant Mamnism, and to redeem the devil's world. No longer should its children inherit the curse of dispossession and the doom of abject dependence. No longer should its children hunger that an ignoble few might loll in idle ease. The honor of the world was at stake—its very soul on trial.

Every man was hereafter to be shielded by possession of an inalienable property portion, and every woman was to be dowered at the altar with an inalienable, income-provided home. And everywhere the shekel was to be made unhoardable—a servant, and not master of the people.

Atlo had twice conquered the beasts of Mam. She would now attempt to subdue the human beasts who were devouring the very flesh of their own flesh, in the world outside of Atlo—mere superapes wearing the form of man.

Never before had so grand a project appealed to a nation; nor ever before was a nation so well instructed and equipped for its execution. Equipped with their giant wasps, their dashing war jubros, and capable of enlisting in their service a fleet of Atlene-propelled jubrets that could plow the seas regardless of wind and tide, what nation was there capable of withstanding it?

What rulers would dare jeopardise their chances to realize the maximum ACTUAL value of their possessions in the face of else forfeiting all? Would they wish to see their castles and palaces burned over their heads, with streams of Atlene poured on them by giant wasps from the upper air? Would they dare oppose their awkward sailing vessels to the Atlene-propelled jubrets?

Would they dare reject the offers made, when the object of the Atlons was made known to the people through messages sent down from the skies, informing them how they were all to be made free-men in fact, and how they were to acquire the properties needful to real freedom? With the lessons of Atlism spread broadcast, would the rulers dare face their own people, without acquiescence to the terms proposed?

There could be no question as to the outcome of the crusade. It was impossible to fail of its purpose.

Thrilled with these exalted motives, the project met with no difficulty in winning popular approval in a series of special ballotings held to legalize the movement; and now plans were soon afoot for providing the necessaries of the expedition. A vast fleet of fighting jubrets, covered with a metallic paint that made them fireproof, was to be con-

structed; and also another fleet for carrying stores of supplies and Atlene. Of wasps they had already enough and to spare, and also of dash jubros. Before another year had passed, it was calculated, the expedition would be ready to start. It was a period of feverish expectation in which the entire nation was alert, watching the progress of the preparations.

Omshola had meanwhile been voluntarily annexed to Atlo, so that the two lands came under the one government. Melka Metel, who had previously retired from the throne, and had retained only what was an elective office, now also retired from office to indulge in a few years of tranquil obscurity before again, if ever, taking part in public affairs. In laying down her crown, she left in the hearts of her people a memory more enduring than marble, a throne they would never cease to honor and revere.

Her people were by this time well on the high-road to enduring liberty, in thought, in speech and in deed—the broad liberty that stretched as far as one might go this side of infringing upon the liberty of others. They approached the workshop, untrammeled by poverty; and the altar, with head up—neither sex dependent on the other—making their union a holy one formed purely of

their own choice, made after due instruction in all matters affecting a wise selection of a lifemate. The solemn union was made more than an empty mockery of words—a union that only too frequently soon was ruptured, or preserved merely to keep up an outward show, from pride and fear of public comment.

The Omsholan belief in spirits in an upper realm was relegated to the realm of myths. They were taught the power of great ideals, such as that of AT, in which humanity—as an organic unity—a living, growing organism, interlocking its individual members in harmonious co-operation for the most efficient supply and satisfaction of its needs—uplifted every member to loftier standards and higher being. They were taught faith in the possibilities of the world by which they were environed—of which they were to make the most, and whose evils they were to submit to only when vain to resist. Under no circumstances were they to lapse into the dangerous lassitude that accepts blindly, as irreconcilable, the wrongs and ills men suffer. They were not by indifference to give countenance to and foster evils. Indifference had slain more men than had the sword, and was the guiltier weapon of the two. They were not to hunt with the Lord, and run with the devil. No man could follow Mammon and worship AT.

Such was the new creed imparted to the Omsholans. The only prayers AT ever heard were those addressed to him through good deeds done to his children—our fellowmen. The utterances, whether thundered or whispered, in glittering temples, never reached AT'S ear. They were only good for deluding one's self or deceiving one's fellowmen.*

Some time after our union, we spent a happy honeymoon on a visit to Omshola. There our wedding ceremony was repeated in public, and a

* The religion of Atlo manifestly consisted in a simple faith in Life and its immeasurable possibilities. To them it was AN ETERNAL HERE, becoming ever more just as they made it more just, and more plentiful as they made it more plentiful—a grander world, as they kept on seeking and endeavoring to fulfill loftier and grander ideals.

Their religion was the frame on which hung their faith, voicing the fires of vitality from which their lifelamp drew its light. It led them upward and onward along the path in which AT guided them, keeping them to their part in his eternal task of creation. . . By this course they avoided the bypaths of division and discord—falling neither into Nature Worship nor Fetishism, into neither Fatalism nor Materialism, into neither Asceticism nor Stoicism, into neither a Mohammedanism nor a Buddhism, into neither a Judaism nor a narrowed Christianity. . . . To them Faith was the gauge of vital energy; and whenever it sank low, they rested from all present labors and cares, until recuperated. What other peoples did through prayers, they did through rest, attaining the same end.

great ovation was given us. There also we remained nearly a year, until I was called to take my place as Chief Interpreter in the approaching crusade for the world's regeneration.

What happened on our return to Atlic—but why say here that which belongs to my next and last chapter? Tragedy can well wait its hour of telling.

## CHAPTER V

### Atlo's Tragic End

Great was the enthusiasm felt throughout all Atlo, and even in all parts of crystal-roofed Omshola, when the bell-signals heralded the tidings announcing the readiness of our grand fleet of soaring wasps and swiftly gliding jubrets to start on the long contemplated crusade for the redemption of the Mamnist world.

Great also was the raging fury of the Evil One, on learning of this menace to his power.

From the dark gloom of his underworld, Sat recognized his utter inability to cope with the Atlons. Therefore was his rage fierce and unquenchable. That Mam's sway upon this earth should be broken, was a thing not to be endured. How else was mankind to be kept under the sway of those temptations by which it was foredoomed to come into his realm, and into his power? Were the Atlon crusade to succeed, how empty would become his underworld!

But how were the Atlons to be defeated? Mam's beast hosts had proven inefficient in coping

with human ingenuity and the power of AT. It was useless to combat them in the upper world. If he could but strike them from below—from his underworld! At the thought, a malignant smile lit up his dire countenance. At last a plan had been conceived. He had hit upon their vulnerable spot. Had not the continent of Atlantis pillars reaching down into his realm from its three peninsulas? He had but to remove these and all Atlo would be shattered, and cease to be. . . . At this dire thought, a demoniac roar of laughter rang out again and again and again, reverberating throughout all the deep recesses and labyrinthian passages of his dark abode and shaking the adamantine walls that girded in his realm.

I was at home in Red Star oro, at the time the signal was given, announcing the readiness of our fleets for the long projected expedition. It was therefore also a summons bidding me prepare for parting with Metel—a parting we both dreaded, remembering how long our previous separation had kept us from each other.

It was painful to think of having so soon to leave the charm of my oro home, whose doors opened into the oroto and into all the oros of wide Atlo, making the land a single home, while preserving for each family the utmost privacy. Yes,

in Atlo we had an undivided and a united home for all—a real brotherhood of man. Yet in all this world was no sweeter spot than in our little oro home, and at Metel's side.

How I longed to hear the light tap, tap, tap of the footsteps announcing her approach!

"So you're going out on the crusade, Loab?" my wife tremuously asked. "I wish you could remain. For my sake, why couldn't you, dear?"

"How could I remain, Metel, after having accepted the post of chief interpreter? It is too late to withdraw my pledge. Gladly would I otherwise comply with your wish."

"I should not ask, Loab, but that I have a presentiment as of some dreadful blow impending; and that if now we part, it might be never to meet again. . . . But hush, I hear a footstep. It's mother."

"You've dropped in like a good fairy, mother dear," joyfully exclaimed Metel, as her mother crossed the threshold. "I was just deploring Loab's departure. But pshaw, what man is worth a tear!"

"Don't let me interrupt you, children! If you have griefs, out with them, as you would drive foul spirits from within."

"I've said I'd grieve for no man, mother; and why for one who refuses to heed my wishes?"

"Such a wish—that I desert my post serving the crusade!"

"Tatler, tatler, babbletongue! Go now, if you will, and stay as long as you please—forever even!"

"What an ocean of wrath to spill out of a tumblerful of body! Be you a good fairy, mother, and calm this tempest, lest it wreck our jubret fleet before it can set out."

"An elegant comedy, children! By all means go on, and recite the rest of it!"

But the rest of the comedy was never recited; for both of us burst into a chorus of laughter, while the former Queen of Omshola took her station beside a tall harp near the wall; and setting the instrument in position, began to strum upon it, accompanying its deep notes with her rich, melodious voice. The words of her song, a popular one, ran thus:

> Love, true love, will last forever;
> Love from love, death cannot sever;
> The grave is but the stepping stone
> From lower, to a higher throne.

The remaining stanzas were left unsung, Mother Mafra being at that moment seized with another of those trance spells, one of which I had on a previous occasion witnessed.

A cold stare, as of death, now held her features, which displayed traces of a terrible fear. The sight of her face, full of evil bodings, sent a chill creeping down my back.

Metel, more self-possessed, admonished me in a whisper to remain perfectly still, while she hastened to gather materials for jotting down what her mother might say.

The seer of Atlo, after mumbling a few unintelligible words, became distinctly audible, saying in a voice inexpressibly sad:

"Dark woe, like a shroud, is falling over Atlo! Alas, alas for the glory of her triumph! Alas for the joys of her victory! Black sorrow will soon engulf the land, and the vengeance of Sat overtake it!

"Terrible is the rage of this demon, gnashing his teeth and spitting flames of fury, as he paces the floor in the gloom of the bottomless pit. All the region, from end to end, is shaking with the vehemence of his wrath!

"Alas for Atlo! Alas! Alas! For her doom is sealed! The decree of the Evil One has been proclaimed. From the bottom of the continent of Atlantis will he pull out the pillars giving it support. From underneath each of its three peninsulas will he withdraw the supports, and each of them will he snatch from its place, crumbling in

his mighty hand. . . . With Atloraba will he begin: and from its loathsome fens will flock to Atlora and Atlo all its winged horrors—fiery dragons, mammoth griffins, giant vultures, venomous insects, and biting bats that spare no life to flesh their teeth once enter. All this pest of horrors is to scourge Atlo; and when the final crash shall sound her note of doom, over her crumbling breast will sweep the devouring sea—her winding sheet and tomb.

"But I now hear the voice of Atl, saying that, as her words come pouring into my ear, so shall they also pour into other ears, until all Atlo has heard. These are her words:

"Hearken, children of Atlo—of Atlo and the new Omshola: From the region of darkness, that is in the bowels of the earth, and that is beyond the sway of AT, has the Evil One decreed the destruction of the continent of which your lands are a part; and few are the hours left you.

"But fear not, for though lives may end, LIFE never ends. Into the body of its eternal stream pours all the matter and all the spirit of its individual lives, returning whence they had come, and passing thus into the everlasting cycle of life. It is ever from grave to cradle and from cradle to grave; for naught is allowed to perish, naught is lost. From the body of life, all life is drawn, and

into that body all life returns; and death is but a shadow—a veil between the going and the coming.

"Hearken ye further, and have no fear lest Atlism perish; for in its own day, far, far off, will its message be borne into the world by one who now is a stranger in your land, when its words will be heard and heeded. Then, in that remote day, its law will become the law of all the world, and so remain for ages and for ages."

Thus ended Mafra's prophecy of doom—of dark doom and of fair hope.

Waking from the trance, she lost no time reading the transcription of her speech, appalled by its dread purport.

As if to attest the truthfulness of Mafra's words, an ominous sound—wide-circling, deep, earth-shaking—began booming from a far, far distance—a distance too remote to be calculable. Our very hearts stood still, and our eyes dilated, staring in mad amazement, while fright paralyzed our limbs. Our oro seemed to reel like a storm-tossed vessel, while loose objects came clattering to the floors. Shock had so tied our tongues, and fear so blanched our faces, we looked like disembodied spirits.

"The death knell of Atloraba!" calmly announced Mafra, after we had recovered our

senses. "Atlora will follow, and last the final crash destroying Atlo."

Then, rising to her full height, with bowed head and in a deep, reverential tone, she spake once more:

"To your decrees, oh Fates, we Atlons bow, submissive, knowing full well your powers are limited. Well we know you lack power to decree an end to the everlastingness of all clay—of all clay, and of all spirit. Though ye close our eyes in the sleep of death, ye cannot bar our return into the stream of eternal life. Ye cannot bar the way twixt grave and cradle. . . . And as our goddess Atl has said, though Atlo perish, Atlism will be preserved."

With a feeling of deep reverence, and profound awe, did Metel and I listen to Mafra's words—words voicing the spirit of Atlon faith.

The dread report of Atlo's doom had been spread to all parts of the realm, even throughout Omshola; and though the Omsholans gave way to cries of lamentation and despair, Atlons displayed their longer rooted faith, accepting the doom in a spirit of resignation. Unmurmuring, they went about as usual, save that they gave consideration to the immediate future. Though a great dread jarred their nerves, they sought, for

the sake of their fellowmen, to conceal it as far as possible, that it should not grow into a general hysteria and madness.

Late in the afternoon of the following day, while in Mother Mafra's quarters, a strange manifestation upon the far horizon, toward the southwest, drew our attention. Over the full breadth of the sky appeared a dark ribbon on which shone a glimmer, as of innumerable dancing lights. It was impossible that it could be a cloud; but what else it might be was for the while a mystery.

As night fell, the glimmering ribbon seemed broader and much nearer the city, soon emitting a strange buzzing as of many intermingled and inharmonious sounds.

"It's the scum of submerged Atloraba," declared Mother Mafra, after a while, "that's what it is! It's the flocks of winged horrors with which we were to be visited—the griffins and dragons, the giant vultures, the biting bats and the pest of venomous insects. Not long indeed have we to wait, ere Sat's dire vengeance will precede destruction with tortures of flame and venom."

The seer's prophecy was coming true. Step by step, the approach of Atlo's doom was being certified by events.

"I mind, children," she resumed, "that one, now

a stranger in the land, is to bear the message of Atlism to the people of the far off age. Who can this stranger be, since there is none I know of here save you, Loab?"

"It is none other than Loab," responded my spouse, "since he has the purport of the message all embodied in a book we have written, in which he and I have contributed the tale of our experiences, borne down to the day of our union. It tells all about the blessings of Atlism, and what is required to secure it."

"Nor is there aught to prevent me from adding to its pages the story of what has transpired since that day. Let me complete the work and launch it, enclosed in a safe receptable, upon the sea, where it may be found in that far off day predicted."

"We'll place it in the golden casket I brought from Omshola, and put the casket into that toy wasp Gauril presented me with; and we'll send it on far, far away from Atlo—to be found in some distant land, after we are all gone and long forgotten."

"That toy wasp will be just the thing, Metel. How came you to think of it?"

"Never mind how, Loab," retorted Metel, "but hasten to your styl and inkpot, and finish the book. We've no moment to spare."

The door at this moment suddenly opened, and in rushed a man whose agonized features, blackened and trickling blood, were bloated with distortion. "The healing salve, dear!" he feebly called, casting himself upon the sofa, with a suppressed groan.

The words had scarcely passed the speaker's lips, whom the reader will have recognized as Physician Gomar, ere Mafra, jar in hand, was gently administering the salve over his blackened face.

"Bitten by venomous insects," he laconically explained, gasping for breath, "so bid me a last farewell, love; and you too, children; for their bite's fatal."

"Nay, husband dear," retorted Mafra through her tears, "we'll all soon be joining you!"

Both Mafra and Metel bid him their last farewell, and I was about to follow, when violent convulsions shook his frame, and in another moment his spark of life had ceased.

As we were mournfully gazing upon the remains, a buzz of insects fell upon our ears; and instantly Metel ran out for veiling with which to protect our faces from their bite, while I closed the door that none more should enter.

Wrapped in the veiling, I was soon after engaged in hurriedly setting down on my papyrus

sheets the portion of my tale still wanting; and I was at length pondering if any more was left to be added, when Metel came frantically to my side, her eyes bedimmed with tears.

"Mafra has followed Gomar! Oh, my poor mother—gone, too! Fate has snatched them from me before my very eyes, and oh——"

"Mafra also!" I cried, dumbfounded.

"Oh, Loab, Loab, how can I speak of it! A horrid bat—a very demon of fury—dashed into mother's face, and bit clean through the veiling. Why, in a flash it was all over, convulsions shaking her so violently, in but a few moments she lay stark and lifeless. Oh, Loab, Loab, the end of all is nigh. For me it cannot come too soon!"

"Be calm, dear, be calm," I urged, though myself trembling in every limb. I then took her arm, and letting her lean upon my shoulder, I bore her to the scene of the tragedy.

Together we lifted poor Mafra's body, and placed it by the side of Gomar's. Together they now lay; and together let their successive counter-types reappear through cycle after cycle, for all eternity.

Once more I betook myself to my styl, to jot down what had just transpired, when a second time I was disturbed—this time by a mighty sound

thundering as if all the earth were being crumpled into bits. It was a noise more than deafening, more than appalling—such a sound as no words can adequately interpret.

Metel, who had been bent over me, fell into a swoon; while, from head to foot, I shook like an aspen. The sight of my spouse, stricken at my feet, aroused me to action. Speedily I had gotten a bowl of water from which to sprinkle her face, while also warming her cold hands in mine.

Recovering her senses, she fortunately recalled naught of what had occurred. But well I realized the dreadful sound proclaimed the sinking of Atlora, and with it also Omshola. It was to be Atlo's turn next.

Weird lights were now flashing outside, accompanied with an ominous discord of harsh noises that filled the darkness with a terror unspeakable. They were here at last—the winged horrors of Atloraba. Above the rasping buzz of an atmosphere alive with one solid mass of stinging insects and biting bats, I could distinctly hear the deep bellowing of fire-spitting dragons, the high-pitched shrieks of iron-taloned griffins, the maniacal screams of hideous vultures, and the sibilant hissing from myriads of flying serpents, all raging with an indescribable fury, stinging to death

all who came in their path and kindling oros with their flaming breath, till all Atlo stood ready to merge into one vast holocaust of flame—fit climax to Sat's demoniac revenge.

Each moment is bringing fresh tokens of Atlo's nearing end. So I must perforce be brief.

To all my readers, facing me across a gap of time counting its years in tens of centuries, I bid a joyous greeting:

Under the light of Atlism, be not surprised to find Mam's shackles still upon your limbs, nor curse the light revealing them; but I pray you, USE the light to BREAK THE SHACKLES OFF.

REDEEM YOUR WORLD, cleansing it of the pollution that befouls it. SPREAD this precious light, and keep on spreading it, till all can see the truth, and all can see the way to justice.

Haste commands few words. Metel is with me, and together we will dispatch our messsage, praying its safe arrival.

When you read these lines, we shall be buried, hand in hand, beneath the dust of scores of centuries, save as rebirth shall cause us to reappear in an eternal round of countertypes of our present selves—perchance to be among you, pouring

over these lines of this strangest of all strange stories, and making strange comments thereon. But let be that which the Fates decree.

And now in this last moment, we send you our love and waft you many kisses from this far off land and this far off age. Seek ye Atlism, earth's fairest jewel. Plant it in your hearts, and in your children's hearts, striving that it may blossom into fruit. Farewell, farewell.

(Her Seal). METEL, Daughter of Mafra.
(His Seal). LOAB, Son of Phra.

In the year 3,432 of the Sun God AT.

# A PARTING WORD

By the Editors

What answer is to be made to the call for Atlism?

Is our world, like Pharaoh of old, to give it a deaf ear?

Are the insufferable plagues of Profiteering Capitalism to be borne, plague after plague—war after war, dearth after dearth, revolution after revolution, terror after terror?

How much longer are we to see our loved ones torn from us, to serve the beast of war; our sons and daughters to be crucified on the cross of hunger and cold and depravities, bred by cruel want?

How much longer is this hand of profiteering thievery, called civilization, to be shielded by the power of the law? How much longer is this whitened sepulcher of disorder and lawlessness to walk this earth masqueraded in the garments of righteousness?

How much longer is this hideous mask of anarchy to go on unrecognized? How much longer is its pretense of property protection to keep the

multitudes dispossessed and naked? How much longer is its pretended competition to hide the burglar's jimmy of monopoly? How much longer is its honest (?) money to go on picking our pockets and tyrannizing over us as master instead of heeding our needs as servant?

How much longer is this Bolshevism of the rich to play havoc with us, and invite the Bolshevism of the poor to riot in its place?

How much longer are our eyes to remain closed to the fact that all these desperate revolts at Profiteering Capitalism, from individual vice and crime to political revolt; from individual anarchy to the wildest extremes of Radicalism and Bolshevism; and from the common inadequacy of earnings, to the horrors of industrial crises, are all alike symptoms of the fundamental defects inherent in Profiteering Capitalism? Is it not clear that the clash between Bolshevik and Profiteering Capitalism is irreconcilable? Neither is supported by reason, or can hope ever to triumph long. Only violence and bloodshed can follow in their trail. Humanity has nothing to gain by either of them.

Have your eyes been opened, reader, by the message of Atlism? Have you heard the appeals of Loab Ben Phra and Metel, Daughter of Mafra, in their last words?

What then is to be your answer? Surely not in a surrender to the hysteria of violence and madness—not in abandonment of calm reason and resolute action.

It will not be necessary to appeal to physical force. A far more powerful force will be at your command—MORAL FORCE—a compelling, uniting, expanding, overwhelming and irresistible force, drawing to its ranks from both rich and poor, the upper and the lower class—a force under which men will remain calm and resolute—steadily moving on to the goal, and sweeping aside all opposition.

Determined patience, while daily teaching the lessons of Atlism and spreading its doctrines, is bound to conquer, and in time to suddenly come down sweeping like a great tidal wave over country after country in our Mamnist world, our sordid world of Commercialism—of Profiteering Capitalism and of arbitrary, headlong Bolshevism, neither of which have a solid footing to stand upon.

And when both Profiteering and Bolshevik Capitalism will have passed away, as pass from us they inevitably will, may their going be in peace; and may they trouble our dreams no more. In that day will the world breathe easier, and a new halo will glorify this earth.

# APPENDIX

## Editorial Comment

### *Irrepressible Usury*

The earliest token of antipathy to Profiteering Capitalism was displayed in ancient legal enactions aimed to suppress the exaction of interest, in those days given the name of usury. Not only was the exaction prohibited by the Hebrews in Palestine, but also by the early Greeks and Romans who had the prohibition incorporated in their statutory laws. . . . Yet in spite of this far-reaching antipathy to the practice of exacting usury, down to this very day we see scarcely any abatement of the offense, and the practice continues as a matter of fact or unavoidable necessity, to no small extent defended by the men of learning in our universities who make the study of economics a profession. . . . Why all this persistence? Simply because in the absence of ability to prevent money hoarding—out of which the power to exact interest arises—to forbid the exaction would cause the pressure of hoarding to be more

intensified and make matters much worse, arresting trade and industry and precipitating riot and disorders unendurable. The demand of the money hoarders was one made on society for its money or its life; and society wisely gave up its money.

*Obstructive Capitalism*

In its earliest use, money was preferred above all other commodities and gathered for the mere love of its accumulation. It was the true and tried rainy day friend of man—the CAPITAL he relied on in emergencies and ventures. . . . Little did he in those days think of the OBSTRUCTIVE and RETARDING influence brought into force by putting into hoards of capital the medium of circulation. He saw only POWER in capital, and power he wanted, at any price. . . . He didn't in that stage of development hoard with the object of exacting interest, but by degrees part of his hoards were coaxed from their hiding places with the honey of interest; and later on, finding it augmented his hoards, he passed from an Obstructive Capitalist into a Profiteering Capitalist; and so society passed from OBSTRUCTIVE to the more enterprising and progressive PROFITEERING CAPITALISM.

*Bolshevik Capitalism*

Under the leadership of Marxian Socialists, the aim of Russian Bolshevism seems to be a gradual evolution to Socialism whose form is to be determined by the circumstances encountered in striving for the goal. . . . Profiteering Capitalism is to be exterminated at all hazards, but how far this step will sink the land into the grip of Obstructive Capitalism is unseen. As the ancients tried to prohibit the exaction of usury by statutory law, so now it is proposed to exterminate Profiteering Capitalism through arbitrary steps and measures. A degree of competition is thus far still retained, and also a hoardable money. . . . As an offset, it is perhaps thought this defect will be remedied in overissues of paper. But if acceptable, paper will be as subject to hoarding as gold, and if rejected it will depreciate to an extent defeating the object of overissues. . . . With eighty per cent. of its population peasantry scattered over a wide region and primitive in their wants, how is a hoardable money to coax them into higher standards of living through which production might be carried on on a much larger scale and with a much greater degree of efficiency? And how will arbitrary methods prevent obstructive disorders from arising and its arbitrary disposition of toilers

from breeding disturbances inimical to success? Is not their experiment therefore dragging them as deeply into Obstructive Capitalism as it is relieving them of Profiteering Capitalism? Is it not to be feared they are leading Russia fatuously on from the frying pan into the fire?

*Communism and Socialism*

Like their sister scheme of Co-operation, Communism and Socialism both depend upon the arbitrary methods of regulating industries met with in shop-wide enterprises. . . . Though Socialism is particularly aimed to operate on a nation-wide or a world-wide scale, its design to avoid the uses of either a transferable money or of automatic competition, at the very outset casts aside the very organs necessary for carrying on so wide an organization of industry. It also casts aside the help of the hundreds of millions of industrial participants whose daily sales of labor and buying of productions automatically puts into motion the process of value determination by which its countless daily dispositions are guided. . . . In place of these tried organs, perverted though they be under Profiteering Capitalism, it would have a bureaucracy of statisticians to do all this infinity of cal-

culating and directing from day to day, as if possessed of powers of lightning speed calculation on such a vast scale and also powers of carrying into operation the infinity of directions to be deduced therefrom. And then, to expect the implicit and prompt obedience necessary from all these hundreds of millions of toilers! Is it not like looking for a mere wish to bring the moon down into one's lap?

*Money—Paper or Metallic?*

Both paper and metallic currencies have their grave defects when not confined within their proper functional use as a medium of exchange. Neither offers a remedy against the disastrous consequences of money hoarding; and neither, of itself, can be considered sound money or even honest money. . . . Under Atlism, however, both the buying and the selling money could be either metallic or of paper, provided they were made of different materials or of different colors; or one might be metallic and the other of paper, as preferred. . . . The question of the cost of the material it is made of is of small moment, since metals are so durable, the cost would have small weight against other considerations.

*Modern Profiteering*

Modern Profiteering differs from Profiteering Capitalism in being spasmodic, confined to limited periods of time and to very limited spheres of action, usually touching merely on a single article at a time. It is a species of raid on the producers, guiltily designed and perpetrated. . . . Profiteering Capitalism, on the other hand, is an indirect and undesigned outcome or accompaniment of money hoarding simultaneously carried on by so many persons and on so large a scale as to give them a power of obstruction and monopoly enabling the exaction of interest on capital. . . . Saving seems to capitalists a wise and a beneficent act, enabling them to serve others with their hoards and therein justifying the price exacted for the "service." That they carry on their saving to an *excessive* degree, whereby others ARE PREVENTED FROM DOING THEIR OWN SAVING, even though inclined to do so—all from inability to sell their services or to obtain for those sold its real and full value—the Profiteering Capitalist fails to see. He is blind to the distinction between harmless abstinence and the *overabstinence* by which he adds millions upon millions to his hoards, and whereby he curtails the earnings and acquisitions of other men.

Profiteering Capitalism, from its universality, its great scope and its continuity of operation is probably a thousand fold the greater evil of the two; and though innocently engaged in, is a thousand times more inimical to industrial society. In criminality it is guiltless much as kleptomania, though entitled to no more toleration than other forms of theft.

*The Marxian Blunder*

Borrowing his conception from that of the British economist, John Stuart Mill, Karl Marx committed the grave error of assuming that LABOR was the only proper ingredient of value. In founding his economic philosophy on this assumption, he lost sight of the mighty influence upon values exerted by the demand for labor made by buyers. As if value could arise in the absence of any demand for productions. If there were no buyers of productions, of what use would labor be in a system of industrial co-operation through exchange? It could have neither use nor value. . . . Through this oversight he was left in the dark and forced to grope in his search for economic light in a maze of inextricable confusion, kept, by his own confession, moving in a vicious circle that led from nowhere to nowhere.

### *Mamnism versus Mammonism*

The reader should be cautioned against the assumption that the words "mammonism" and "Mamnism" are synonymous terms. Mamnism is a piratic industrial system described in these pages, whereas mammonism is merely a mental symptom of the corrupting influences of Mamnism. It is a malevolent growth that cannot be dispelled while Mamnism, its root, remains alive.

### *Banished from Atlo*

From the fact that our Atlon writers make no mention of Polygamy, so uniformly prevalent in Mamnist lands, we may safely infer its absence in the New Atlo as due to its superior distribution of wealth and the independent position occupied by its women. The same causes no doubt obliterated that substitute for Polygamy usually appearing in the form of the Social Evil.

### *A Prince of Profiteers*

It is almost amusing to note the innocent zeal with which Pharaoh, through his minister Joseph, on receiving the tip concerning the approaching famine, bought up all the corn in Egypt, holding

an absolute monopoly of this means of sustenance. . . . With the arrival of the drouth year we therefore also see the toilers of the land on their knees to Joseph, praying for corn enough to save them from starvation. . . . How they were thereafter, step by step, profiteered out of their money, their cattle, their lands and at length of their very persons, to become forever after slaves of Pharaoh, is unblushingly told in the book of Genesis, 47, beginning with verse 13. . . . In return for all their purchases from Pharaoh, this Lord of the Land bought not a stitch of their labor. All his demand for more temples and tombs, more palaces and pyramids, more roadways and canals, and more bridges, not to mention more soldiers, this shrewd monarch deferred till AFTER their complete dispossession and subjection as slaves. He knew how to secure cheap labor, and he got it.

*Juggling With Values*

The ready explanation of value given by our sober economists as a quantity determined by supply and demand is on a par with the test by which witches were distinguished from the innocent when deemed innocent if they drowned and guilty if they swam. . . . The economists totally

ignore the freedom with which the supply of commodities is allowed to be monopolized, and also the enormous extent to which the labor demand is stuffed with demand for UNREMUNERATED LABOR required to supply the UNEARNED income on capital; also the extensive WITHHOLDING of demand for labor accompanying money hoarding, in which capital originates. . . . Of course, such matters are too trivial for our economists to consider, and are not brought forward by professional economists as worthy of serious consideration.

It is well enough to tell Socialists that demand, as well as labor, must be considered in determining values; but it is not well enough to follow up this logic by pointing out that the capitalist has never contributed the least element of genuine labor demand to justify the value of his wealth. In its origin, the capitalist contributed not a particle of labor demand, and in its use only a bogus demand—a demand for UNREMUNERATED labor, such as the slave was given when more labor was exacted from him.

All this might have been expected under Profiteering Capitalism, operating without a work-distributing medium such as Atlons had in their bronze shekels—a medium that conserved for each toiler his portion of work—the quantity of work

he made by his spending—by excluding all from any share in the work output who did not help in the making of work by spending money. . . . If demand for labor is an element of value, as it certainly is, its makers are entitled to that value and ought to have some claim on it. This the Atlon toilers had in the form of their bronze shekels which saved them from competition with mere money hoarders and the bogus "services" of capitalist money-hoards through which the largest part of the money received for productions was diverted to capitalists under Profiteering Capitalism. . . . As well try to apportion the product output without giving to the toilers who contribute their labor to its making any tangible claim on it—without, in other words, paying them a money wage. . . . If just values are ever to prevail, both the work and the product outputs must each have its distributing medium, and the work-maker must be recognized as well as the product-maker, in the apportionment of both work and productions.

*Our Palace Poverty*

In considering the nation's vast riches, how many of us think of the enormous burden its support with interest heaps upon our toilers. The great bulk of it is one body of duplicated, inflated

and fictitious wealth—a vast balloon filled with the gas of capitalized monopoly. But for its power of extortion, it would have small value indeed. . . . And yet the nation upon whose labor, manual and mental, its support is burdened, seems to feel proud of the burden, like the ass whose back is bowed with a load of golden ingots. . . . Owning a few paltry hundreds or thousands in property and bank accounts, the toiler is deluded into thinking himself prosperous, blind to the fact that only one-third of the produce of his labor ever reaches him, and the loss, equally to probably a full two thousand a year, is as much as one's income from $40,000. What a lot of quackery and fraud is concealed in the representations of the stump speakers and the press in general in flattering our people with pictures of their prosperity while ignoring the real truth concerning their status. To flatter them with the fact that they are faring better than toilers in other lands is like the burglar's defence that he left the victim's house better supplied than other houses he had plundered. . . . But what of the millions upon millions of toilers whom it leaves practically penniless, in debt to the grocer, the butcher, the baker, the tailor and the dress maker? What of those pinching from hand to mouth, worrying and fretting out their days to keep out of the poor house?

What of those whom it drives into abandonment, surrendering to vice and crime? Are they weaker mortals? So much the worse if inducements to lead a better life are debarred by the demand for tribute as the price of getting work and bread. Are they who steal in sheer desperation worse than those who rob in ignorance through extortion?

How much longer are we to go on worshipping the rod that smites us? How much longer is the glitter of wealth to delude us poor lambs from whose back its golden fleece is shorn? How much longer are we to be blinded by the glitter of a Palace Plenty concealing the gloom of our Poverty Barn?

*Christianity and Atlism*

If Christianity was the first creed to proclaim the doctrine of human brotherhood, Atlism is the first to point the way to a practical realization of the dream. If the one has spent twenty centuries in daily prayers for peace on earth, the other has shown the conditions under which such a peace is attainable.

Is Christianity now ready to take the forward step and give its support to the cause of Atlism —to the realization of its age-old dreams? Will

it be true to itself and to the humanity whose salvation has been its time-old mission? Let it be hoped that the claws of the beast of Mamnism hold it not so fast it cannot break loose from the monster's grip.

Can Christianity rise to the level of its lofty aims? Can it cut itself loose from the worship of Mammon and that other dread idol, literalism in biblical interpretation—the source of hopeless division into sects and ceaseless dissension? Can it free itself and become a great unifying influence, broad enough and liberal enough to gather under its wing believer and unbeliever, Jew and Mahommedan and Buddhist? If it would save itself, this forward step is an absolute necessity. Let it be warned.

### *Modern Push Wings*

In striking contrast with Atlo's beneficent Push Wing, leading modern nations are each equipped with a push wing devoted to the enlargement of its foreign trade and influence. Ostensibly operated for the benefit of the nation, they are really in the hands of a limited number of our billionaires whose power determines the agents through whom they are officially conducted.

As to the actual need of a larger foreign trade, press, politicians and statesmen are united in maintaining a clamorous wail bemoaning our inability to dispose of ALL we are able to produce and to keep all our toilers at work. How otherwise fill the great gap of deficiency from which the home market must else collapse?

That our enterprising billionaires pile up their surplus millions by MAKING this gap of deficiency through consuming less than a half of their vast income—that they MAKE THE GREAT LEAK in the home market—is far too insignificant a discovery for the keen and sleepless sleuths of the press to bother with. Such revelations are a specialty belonging exclusively to economists serving in institutions under the control and patronage of the billionaire class. Why borrow trouble when we already have more than enough of the commodity? Is it not enough to keep the public eye glued on the BIG, BIG WORLD MARKET, even though every portion of it is starving from gaps of deficiency at home. We have only to dash bravely into this BIG MARKET, sharp diplomacy in one hand and heavy armaments in the other, to compel it to yield us what we want in larger trade.

But back of all this agitation for expansion of our foreign trade—the demand of all our great

nations—is not merely a desire to conceal and cover up the big gaps of deficiency at home made by the home capitalists, but a call to indefinitely enlarge the volume of our foreign trade and to use the proceeds in adding to the volume of our foreign properties and the income to be derived from them? Is it not a repetition of the ancient trick taught mankind by the devil's dam, Mammon? Do not the properties bring with them the free slaves whose unremunerated toil has to supply the income they yield? Reduced to the naked truth, is it not a repetition of SLAVERY EXTENSION with free instead of chattel slaves from whom to grind its extortions?

What a profitable and respectable calling is this enterprising piracy, raking over the high seas, far and wide, in adding to its possessions millions upon millions of free slaves to toil abroad for their invisible masters. With what pleasure these knights of gold can lean back in their church pews, wrapped in a halo of righteousness and anointed with the oil of sanctity.

What if this sport of the money kings embroil the nations in the turmoil of ceaseless wars and steep them in rivers of human blood? Will not the cloak of patriotism cover all the sin and whiten its dark stains like purest snow? Is it not a part of patriotism for the home free slaves to open

their veins in the glorious cause of adding more free slaves to the domains of our kingly billionaires, our glorious saints of democracy? Why not sink everywhere the lesson of this new patriotism—this wider patriotism—into the hearts of the free slaves at home? Why not spread this latest gospel of patriotism?

Like guilty Macbeth, Profiteering Capitalism has waded so far in blood, returning were as tedious a voyage as going on. RUIN faces it abroad, and at home the inevitable call for repair of the trade deficiency in the home market by making good the delinquent spending due it also spells RUIN. . . . In the heart of the BIG WORLD MARKET the bloody maelstrom of interminable wars forbids these uncrowned kings to lead their nations. It threatens to wash home the cursed blood and mingle it with their own. And unless they mend the gaps of trade deficiency at home, a bloody doom must face them.

There is no further escape from the dilemma. Profiteering Capitalism has reached the end of its tether. Its wail for larger foreign markets has sounded its death knell—its confession of breaking down, the beginning of its end. As a permanent institution it is a hopeless failure.

It is now the turn of Profiteering Capitalism to

face her doom, even as Atlo had to face hers. . . . But while Atlism is to be restored, the scheme of Sat's spouse, Mam, is doomed to sink in a sea of oblivion, never to rise again.

THE END